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COMMONWEAL

WHY THE THIRD WORLD GOES HUNGRY
KATHY McAFEE

LORDS OF POVERTY
JOHN P. HOGAN

THE EDITORS

ABORTION
Who won this round?: PAUL BAUMANN • Persuasion preferred: JOHN GARVEY

Liturgy and Lawns: PEGGY ROSENTHAL
Screen: RICHARD ALLEVA • Stage: GERALD WEALES • Media: FRANK McCONNELL

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CORRESPONDENCE

Defending the 'Call'

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: Your editorial [April 20] on the Call to Action's church reform pastoral letter seemed to say, "Yes, we agree with almost everything the letter said, but after much thought and meditation we have come up with some things it doesn't say—and therefore we can't endorse it."

The letter, you assert, does not set boundaries on Catholic identity. How could you possibly expect it to attempt such a prodigious undertaking? What the letter says is that many of the conclusions of serious ecumenical scholars and theologians have been relegated to bookshelves since Vatican II, and this is a tragedy. *Commonweal* seems to agree with that.

Secondly, you say that the letter does not have a "sense of the sacred"; yet the letter explicitly deals with fundamental virtues like justice, equity, and reasonableness in the internal organization of the church. It's painfully clear that the absence of such virtues is precisely what deters many contemporary people of goodwill from probing the church for the sacred message it contains and offers.

Your twin concerns of Catholic identity and sense of the sacred find their most profound expression in the Eucharist, whose very existence is threatened by a priest shortage due to restrictions on who can be priests. The need to preserve the Eucharist through expanding the priesthood is central in our letter. Also, Catholic identity and sense of the sacred is precisely why many people are enthusiastic about the letter. Why else would they be fighting the good fight to make the institution healthy again?

Your commentary downplays the importance of the "justice in the church" issue among young people, but CTA's experience over thirteen years with young adult volunteers who give a year of their lives to us indicates otherwise. Young people commit to our vision because our justice focus is consistent.

As for your somewhat mysterious declaration that the liberal-conservative axis is "wobbling," you do not suggest what new polarities or convergences have replaced it. So the reader is left in a state of frustrated befuddlement. You can call the perennial conflict liberal vs. conservative or culture one vs. culture two or whatever other set of terms is current. But the attempt to stifle the Spirit and stuff it in a box must be confronted and resisted in every age. That is what the CTA letter does.

We can't really see what axis we're on as we spin along, but over the years CTA has had lots of revolving energy around reflection and action, justice in society and justice in the church, looking back and looking ahead, cooperation and critique, hope and humor. We're convinced that now is the time for all concerned Catholics to speak out together on these issues.

That said, we welcome the critique and hope that whatever fine tuning the statement might need won't prevent signatures from many who stand in solidarity with us on the basic content. For copies of the statement write Call to Action, 3900 N. Lawndale, Chicago, Illinois 60618, or call 312-604-0400.

DAN DALEY & SHEILA DALEY

The writers are co-directors of Call to Action.

The editors reply:

We welcome the Daleys' response and rejoinder. To sign or not to sign the "Call to Action" was and remains a close call for us as for many others who wrote [Correspondence, June 1]. To continue that discussion briefly: The issues included in the "Call" may all be necessary but together they are not, in our view, sufficient for what lies ahead. Our references to the "wobbly" liberal-conservative axis and the next several generations are not "mysterious declarations" so much as intuitions that pre-Vatican II Catholics need to speak as much about why to love and treasure the church as about what needs changing. Liberals, in their concern to bring about change, tend to leave the former task to conservatives, who, in their concern to stop change, seem sometimes to love the church for the wrong reasons. It is true that young people walk into the offices of the Call to Action—as into *Commonweal's*—because they identify with our sensibilities and our agendas. Good. But we all need to worry over the young who do not walk through anybody's door, who do not identify with any Catholic sensibility or agenda. Clearly this is a conversation that needs to continue and we look forward to hearing more voices. THE EDITORS

Nurses & care

Durham, N.H.

To the Editors: I was challenged and provoked by Daniel Callahan's essay on "The Primacy of Caring" [February 23], but, as a professor of nursing, I was disappointed that in his only reference to nurses the author wrote: "Too often it is nurses who are expected to provide caring, however."

From a nursing perspective, there is nothing wrong with placing this expectation with the nursing profession; giving care, knowledgeably and compassionately, is what nurses are educated to do and want to do. The problem is rather that the work of care has been and is undervalued in our

(Continued on page 397)

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COMMONWEAL 65

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The politics of hunger

Geopolitical thinking has changed wildly over the past couple of years, but, as Bryan Hehir pointed out in these pages last fall [November 17], it still does not encompass any serious reappraisal of North-South relations, as opposed to East-West. In all the coverage of the Bush-Gorbachev summit, we saw no analysis of the possible meaning of the cold war thaw for the third world. A more explicit example is the cover article in the October 1989 *Atlantic* entitled "The Coming Global Boom." *Global?* In a letter to the magazine [February *Atlantic*], reader Patricia Neal points out that for writer Charles Morris, the word appears to mean "a triangle composed of the Pacific Rim, Europe, and the United States"; whole continents and scores of nations rate scarcely a mention. If indeed a boom is coming, asked Neal, will the third world be allowed entry? Morris replied:

"Underdeveloped countries saddled with corrupt elites, whether of the left, right, military, or Communist variety, will not share in a future global prosperity; but those who force real political reform will do quite nicely."

That formula is too simple by far, but it includes a saving kernel of truth. Whoever and whatever is responsible for the problems of the global South, third-world peoples themselves will have to supply most of the energy and prodding needed if they are to overcome their marginalization; on its own motion the first world will not devote major resources (or attention) to their problems.

But that is not the core message most people will find in Morris's statement. The reason it is worth citing is that it is a particularly succinct rendering of a near-universal attitude—third-world suffering is not *our* problem—that gives too-easy comfort while ignoring what is at stake for both the developed and developing nations.

Morris speaks bravely of ousting corrupt elites. Elitist third-world regimes come equipped with tear gas, live bullets, tanks, and helicopters, and are not unwilling to use them, as in Tiananmen Square, Soweto, the villages of Guatemala, and the slums of San Salvador. In some regions, many of those who might benefit from the ouster of these elites are landless, jobless, illiterate, unarmed. In some areas, particularly in Africa, it is hard to achieve unity for struggle, military or political, in the face of ethnic distrust and language differences. Even when a third-world revolution led by middle-class idealists succeeds, as in Nicaragua, it risks failure if it tries too hard or too clumsily to implement the populist, redistributionist ideology that helped bring it to power; it will be constrained and punished by a loss of markets and credit, and by externally funded violence. For that matter, an elected, nonrepressive, nonsocialist new regime will not by its virtues earn significant influence over the terms of trade, aid, credit, or debt reduction: the key factors that determine the chances of achieving development with equity.

In her article on the root causes of third-world hunger [pp. 380-385], Kathy McAfee

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describes the network of controls, invisible to most of us, through which the developed nations profit, at least in the short term, by keeping undeveloped countries in a subordinated state. The roots are in history; third-world countries are caught up in relationships and structures that are the legacy of colonialism. North Americans have some trouble understanding this. As elsewhere, the Europeans who came here used their superior weaponry to subdue the indigenous people; but, because of their circumstances, including their motives for emigrating, they became settlers rather than colonizers, oriented toward development rather than exploitation of the land.

Not so in Africa, Latin America, the Indian subcontinent, where the Europeans arrived as conquerors and stayed as masters, acting as agents of their home countries in the transfer of resources across the seas. Even with the end of colonialism in clear view, some empire builders did almost nothing to prepare their subjects for independence. Others, when they pulled out, left behind ready-made elites who shared their values and, usually, their bloodlines. Despite any number of coups and rebellions, most of the ex-colonies remain oligarchies whose leaders are content with national economic dependency as long as they can serve, for rich rewards, as collaborators in the continued exploitation of their countries' people and resources. First-world elites share that complacency. Despite lip service praising third-world development carried out in the interests of its peoples, most movers and shakers in the developed nations act in solidarity to maintain the status quo, through the mechanisms described by McAfee.

Her analysis focuses in part on the role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Created originally to monitor and moderate the workings of the international financial system, the Fund now functions almost exclusively in the third world—but not, she finds, in its behalf. Several contributors to a recent study sponsored by the Overseas Development Council (ODC) (*Pulling Together*, Transaction Books) confirm that, with a few recent exceptions, the IMF has served primarily as a bill collector for big Northern banks, and that its conditions for granting desperately needed credit to borrowing countries insure that the burdens of repayment are borne mostly by the poor. The Harvard economist Jeffrey Archer, for example, reports that the Fund does not even gather data about the distributional effects of its "structural adjustment" programs. He adds that the virtual exemption from taxes enjoyed by the wealthy in Latin America may be the region's chief political and economic "illness," and yet the IMF has never addressed the issue publicly, much less required tax reform as a condition for loans.

Another ODC-sponsored study (*Environment and the Poor*, Transaction) provides region-by-region details confirming that increasing poverty produces environmental losses that in turn deepen poverty: a cycle that becomes more vicious by the day. But the cycle *could* become benign. From a study of Madagascar, Princeton's Alison Jolly concludes not only that the preservation of nature is compatible with the lessening of poverty, but that "lessening poverty is fundamental to saving the wilderness environment, and wise use of the environment is one of the strongest means to combat poverty."

Because of the new environmental awareness, that is a message that can raise an echo. Saving nature for all of us could become a proxy issue for saving people—much as, in this country, the powerful appeal of children's needs has engendered support for programs that help women, families, neighborhoods, and cities. Directly addressing the injustice of the global economic system is harder, but a similar rationale is at hand: Along with acute suffering, worsening poverty creates political instability that is not in the interest of either first-world or third-world elites. Again, there is a corollary. Serious moves toward equity would do more than keep the natives quiet; in the long or even the medium term, it would create markets.

This kind of thinking is said to be gaining influence at the IMF and the World Bank. Both institutions, however, are the creatures of the developed countries that set their policies. Thus far, these nations have put *laissez-faire* ideology and the short-term interests of the first world above the needs of the poor countries, the state of the environment, and longer-term economic sanity. That is why the work of the ODC, of non-governmental aid organizations North and South, the insistent preachments of John Paul II, and recent declarations by the U.S. Catholic bishops are so important. As in the East, so in the West; significant change will not occur until a signal comes from the center to the periphery that maintaining the empire is no longer cost-effective.

ET CETERA

HISTORIC ANNIVERSARIES Two distinguished journals for which *Commonweal* has strong affinity are currently celebrating major anniversaries: *The Tablet* (48 Great Peter Street, London, SWIP 2HDSB England) and *Cross Currents* (c/o The College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, N.Y. 10801).

The *Tablet* is completing an unbroken century-and-a-half of distinguished publishing which is detailed in *The Tablet 1840–1990, A Commemorative History*, by Michael Walsh and available from the journal's London office. Through the years it has gone through various phases. Founded in 1840 by laymen, it remained under lay control until 1868, when it was purchased by Father Herbert Vaughan. From 1892 until 1936, it was owned and operated by the archbishops of Westminster, and its stand was staunchly conservative, in keeping with its ties to Britain's old Catholic families.

The *Tablet* was restored to its original lay status in 1936, under the strongly conservative cast of editor Douglas Woodruff. His successor in 1967 was Tom Burns, who steered the journal toward its present decidedly more liberal, if orthodox, stance. His attitude toward *Humanae vitae* was highly critical. Since 1982 the *Tablet* has been ably edited by John Wilkins with its all-round quality top-notch and its circulation at an all-time high.

The May 19 Anniversary Issue, which comes to fifty-two full pages, leads off with an article by Archbishop Rembert Weakland on "The Church in the Market Place." The special issue includes among other features the reminiscences of former

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editor Tom Burns, an article on the laity by Archbishop Derek Worlock of Liverpool, and tributes from Cardinal Basil Hume and Robert Runcie, the archbishop of Canterbury.

The *Tablet's* purview is the whole world, and its news of the church the world over is clearly the best coverage in English anywhere. To maintain a journal of such remarkable quality week after week, decade after decade, is a most impressive achievement. May there always be a *Tablet*.

In our own country, *Cross Currents* is celebrating its fortieth anniversary. From the start it has been a most scholarly journal. Under the inspiration of French and other European philosophers and theologians, who were previously little known in the United States, *Cross Currents* brought their stimulating ideas to bear on the terrain of Catholic thought in postwar America. With the years the scope of this impressive quarterly has widened to include America's and the changing world's more immediate concerns. Its decades of achievement are ably encapsulated in the *Anthology of the Best in Cross Currents*, edited by William Birmingham and recently published by Crossroad.

Joe and Sally Cunneen, who founded and still inspire it, managed all this in the face of constant production needs and despite the most slender means. The dedication of the Cunneens and of others who were enthusiastic volunteers has made *Cross Currents* an enterprise of successful cooperative effort. It is an inspiring story. Our sincere congratulations.

CONNECTICUT ABORTION LAW

WHO WON THIS ROUND?

PROLIFE CLAIMS A LEGAL BEACHHEAD

"Connecticut Acts to Make Abortion a Statutory Right," read the *New York Times* headline. "Measure is Seen as Guarantee if High Court Strikes Down *Roe* v. *Wade* Decision."

Abortion-rights activists hailed the new Connecticut law. "It's a very important victory," the April 28 story quoted Dawn Johnsen, legal director of the National Abortion Rights Action League. "This is the first state law that says a woman has a right to choose an abortion, not just under the Constitution, but under state law."

The Connecticut statute, which repealed century-old but inactive laws making abortion a criminal offense, guarantees a woman's right to an abortion before the fetus is viable. Viability is not defined, nor is viability testing required. After viability, generally twenty-four weeks, abortion is prohibited except to "preserve the life or health of the mother." Physicians are to determine viability. Both prolife and prochoice groups agree that the language, adopted from the Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe* v. *Wade* decision, essentially means abortion-on-demand. The law also requires professional, nondirective counseling for girls fifteen and under.

In keeping with *Commonweal's* usual summer schedule, only one issue is published each month during July and August. The next issue will be dated July 13.

Confusingly for many readers, however, the news accounts reported that prolife groups supported the bill. How was that possible? How could prolife groups, or the Catholic archdiocese of Hartford, reconcile themselves to such a self-evidently prochoice law?

"The choice groups have given this an amazing spin-off in the media," said Susan Smith, legislative administrator for the Pro-Life Council of Connecticut (PLCC), the state's principal prolife lobby. Ms. Smith, who grows agitated when discussing what she calls "bias" in the media, took pains to explain the prolife aspects of the Connecticut law. The bill was in fact the work of prolife legislators, and was opposed by choice groups until the moment it passed, she said. Abortion-rights groups had sought a law that would prohibit interference in abortion at any time, and opposed any law requiring counseling for minors. They did defeat a parental notification amendment to the bill.

Prolife support for the bill is pragmatic but not apologetic. The Pro-Life Council of Connecticut and its allies embraced a strategy of legislative compromise perhaps best articulated by Mary Ann Glendon, a professor of law at Harvard University. "A conscientious Catholic legislator may 'settle' for, say, prohibiting sex-selection abortions if that is all that is feasible in a given state," Ms. Glendon has written. "Indeed, that minimal protection establishes a legal beachhead for the principle that human life must be legally respected."

According to Ms. Smith, Connecticut's explicit prohibition of abortion after viability is such a beachhead. Connecticut's General Assembly had rebuffed all prolife initiatives since 1973. Putting restrictions of any kind on abortion, such as requiring counseling for minors, is an important step forward. "This has been a major effort, and it's been grassroots," Ms. Smith said. "If anything, it's been a major breakthrough for us in the state of Connecticut."

But Connecticut remains a very strong prochoice state. Prolife groups admit that the law's specific restrictions are minimal, and the immediate impact on the availability of abortion will be slight, if not nil. Most experts estimate that 99 percent of Connecticut's twenty thousand annual abortions occur before viability. But the counseling requirement stipulates that only trained professionals can be used, and the counseling must include strong encouragment that the minor inform her parents. Doctors will be liable should a girl not receive proper counseling.

Some prolife groups have attacked the PLCC for its support of decriminalization. But removing the nineteenth-century statutes that made abortion a criminal offense—laws which were already ruled unconstitutional by the *Roe* decision—was not a problem for the PLCC. "You have extremists in every movement," Ms. Smith said. But her group was not interested in throwing women who've had abortions into jail. "The majority of the women who work in this office have had abortions," she added.

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"We are politically realistic," she said. "We believe in restrictive legislation. You try to save as many as you can." Ms. Smith referred to the Idaho legislature's recent passage of a much stricter anti-abortion law, which was subsequently vetoed by the governor. That's what happens when extremists dominate, she said. "That was a major political disaster."

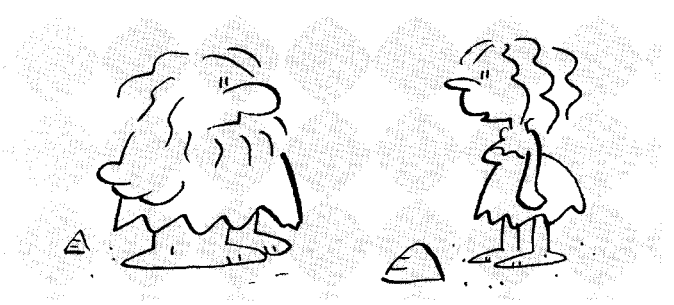
Still, some prolife advocates criticized the PLCC's support of the bill, especially the adoption of *Roe*'s language on viability and its broad definition of "health." Daniel Degnan, S.J., former dean of Seton Hall University Law School, expressed skepticism over the tactical wisdom of the Connecticut prolife forces. "Health is defined so broadly by *Roe* v. *Wade*; it's for any reason at all. There can't be any second-guessing," he said. "I think the Connecticut bishops made a major mistake. I think the last thing that prolife forces want to do is enshrine *Roe* v. *Wade* in legislation....They should have tried to impose real restrictions in the final four months."

Most Connecticut prolife spokesmen think such an agenda is simply unrealistic. Robert Ward, an attorney and a Republican state representative, was a member of the Judiciary Committee that drafted the law. He has long worked for prolife legislation. "Frankly, it's a judgment call," Ward said, when asked if it was an error to put *Roe*'s formulations into state statutes. But he didn't see how the new statute would encumber prolife efforts in the future, or how it would be any worse than the present situation. Connecticut's statutory "silence" about abortion meant anything was permitted. "So I see very little difference. I don't see it as a stumbling block....the law will not bind future legislatures."

Ward considers the new law a setback for advocates of abortion on demand. "Either they're lying to us now or they were lying before," he said of the prochoice lobby. As Ms. Smith did, Ward noted that Connecticut's new law is very different from the bill orginially supported by the Connecticut Coalition for Choice, the state's principal abortion-rights lobby.

Prohibiting abortions after viability puts pressure on the physicians and will discourage late abortions, Ward continued. "But the most important thing...is that we've never focused on the unborn child in Connecticut. I think we can now refocus the debate. The state now says an unborn child can be protected....I think that's what was important—the right of government to intervene. That will reform and redefine the debate."

Richard Tulisano, the Democratic chairman of the Judiciary Committee, did not hesitate to call the law a compromise. "I am not so sure," Tulisano said when asked if the bill was the prochoice victory widely claimed. "The people from prochoice have redefined what choice means." Arguing that a state law prohibiting abortion after viability is a prochoice victory is odd, he said. "That's not quite what the prochoice position was six months ago....They put a real spin on it."



"Now that we can talk, can we talk?"

Tulisano, who described himself as prolife, saw several positive developments. Opposing mandatory counseling for minors was something abortion-rights groups could not justify. The practical impact of the viability rule could go either way, he said. "I'm shooting crap that it goes downward. Prochoice is shooting crap that it stays the same."

"Prolife finally has something in law," he added. "You have to remember that Connecticut has been an unrestrictive state, and from that point of view it's a compromise."

Prochoice spokesmen have minimized the counseling requirement, arguing that unbiased options counseling is standard procedure in abortion clinics. But legal liability will reshape the way things are done, Tulisano said. "Doctors are going to have their malpractice insurance on the line. There's a burden on them."

In drafting the bill, Tulisano concentrated on what the two sides could agree on. "The center has a lot more in common than either fringe end," he said. For example, both sides agreed that criminal penalties were inappropriate. Tulisano hopes future legislation will impose increasing restrictions on abortion as the fetus develops. He pointed to European abortion laws as examples the U.S. should follow.

An informed consent requirement for all women seeking abortions also is something Tulisano supports. "I'm pushing it, prochoice doesn't like it."

But restricting abortion isn't enough, he added. European countries provide social benefits that encourage women to have children. The U.S. should do the same. "We never get involved in the alternative—a social system that enourages women to choose life. In kind of a benign way we encourage people to have abortions because it's cheaper."

The Rev. Thomas Barry, secretary to Archbishop John Whealon and prolife director of the Hartford archdiocese, agreed the law was "essentially a step in the right direction. Most prolife people feel the same way. But it's only a first step."

But the archdiocese did not come out for this bill, he added. Barry described the law as basically supportive of abortion. "Therefore it's not the type of legislation the archdiocese could explicitly support. But it is not seen as a victory for abortion rights, either." The position of the archdiocese is perhaps best expressed by quoting Thomas More, said Barry: "What you cannot turn to good you must make as little bad as you can."

"Connecticut is still a strong prochoice state," he said, and there is little prospect that abortion will be outlawed. Echoing the PLCC's position, he said future legislation should seek to strengthen the current bill. Missouri's law, upheld by the Supreme Court last year which requires viability testing and prohibits state-funded hospitals from performing abortions, is a model to follow.

Ward said a turnaround of 40 to 50 percent of Connecticut's legislators would be required to challenge abortion before viability. Pushing for such laws now means "you'll accomplish

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nothing." But he said a redrafted parental notification bill might pass in the next session of the General Assembly.

Some prochoice advocates have argued that prolife legislators accepted abortion on demand as the norm when they voted for the new Connecticut law. "That's a deliberate misrepresentation of the views of the prolife legislators," Ward said. "And I think [they] know that."

At this time, prolife groups in Connecticut think political compromise is the most responsible course to follow in their battle against legalized abortion. PAUL BAUMANN

Paul Baumann is associate editor of Commonweal.

REPORT FROM VENEZUELA

THE PERILS OF PRIVATIZATION
AND WHY ELITES ELOPE

In the last decade, *privatization*—whereby public owned companies are sold to the private sector—became a catchword in Latin America and was widely viewed as a panacea for the continent's economic woes. But like so many other intellectual and material fads in these countries, the privatization model was imported lock, stock, and barrel from the North. The economic policies of the Reagan and Thatcher administrations in the conservative camp, and Felipe González in the social democratic one, sanctified privatization, while *perestroika* opened the hitherto unheard of possibility that private economic interests would play a central role in Communist bloc nations.

Those Latin American leaders who may have been reluctant to accept these examples had privatization forced down their throats by the international banking community, headed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which insisted on it as a condition for rescheduling their foreign debt.

For a while privatization did not have any vocal detractors in Latin America. But recently, as the IMF-imposed policies have begun to take effect, a backlash has set in. In past months, railroad workers in Argentina have taken to the streets in opposition to the plans of *peronista* president Carlos Menem to dismantle and privatize various train lines, which will undo one of Juan Domingo Perón's most important legacies: the nationalization of the English-owned railroads in 1947.

Like Argentina, Venezuela's privatization plans go counter to a tradition established by the ruling party, and more specifically by the current president, Carlos Andrés Pérez. During his first term in office at the time of the oil-induced boom of the 1970s, Pérez nationalized the iron and oil industries and declared "evolutionary socialism" a long-range goal. In the lean years of his second term, however, Pérez has backtracked and now argues that Venezuela has no alternative but to accept privatization and other IMF-endorsed austerity measures.

The main objective of privatization is "industrial reconversion" and "rationalization" of production—flashy euphemisms for reduction of the work force and elimination of all but the most profitable operations. While brusque and thorough streamlining of this sort may be viable for developed nations, it will have disastrous consequences in a country like Venezuela. With a majority of the working population belonging to the "industrial reserve," privatization will be translated into long-term unemployment for displaced workers whom the economy will not be able to absorb.

Under privatization, Venezuelan capital will most likely become a junior partner of foreign interests. Historically, capitalists in the third world have not played the catalytic role in economic development that their counterparts in the developed countries have. The unwillingness of Venezuelan businessmen to assume risks was clearly demonstrated in the early 1980s when, at the first ever-so-faint signs of trouble resulting from declining oil prices, they transferred their local investments to banks and real estate in Florida and elsewhere. Now that the situation of economic crisis is compounded by political uncertainty (as a result of popular mobilizations and leftist advances in gubernatorial and municipal elections in December), there is all the more reason to be skeptical about their participation in developmental plans. Unless state companies are put up for sale at bargain prices (which may well happen in some cases), they cannot be expected to repatriate most of their dollars.

No one in Venezuela, except perhaps the most dogmatic socialists, would deny that selective privatization and streamlining are desirable. When the economic situation was more promising, the government bought out dozens of companies and banks that were going bankrupt. Of the 250 state-run enterprises in Venezuela, many are in areas which are not considered strategic; the public sector accounts for as much as 30 percent of the nation's GNP.

Certain key public companies and agencies have also been run into the ground by poor management and featherbedding—as is recognized even by the labor unions. The IMF's "shock treatment" strategy envisions the sudden overhaul of these businesses, including mass layoffs. A more gradual approach, based on worker retraining and relocation, would be both more humanitarian and beneficial to the economy in the long run. For such an operation to be successful, however, it must be managed by the government and not the private sector, which has little reason to concern itself with the problem of worker dislocation.

The main business organization, *Fedecamaras*, however, argues in favor of privatization of companies which are in key areas, even when they are not in the red. In a recent statement, *Fedecamaras* asserted: "The privatization strategy proposed by business is directed in a fundamental way toward companies in basic industry, independently of whether their financial balance at the present" is favorable.

One ailing company in basic industry that may be privatized is the Orinoco Steel (SIDOR). SIDOR was the pride and joy of Pérez's first administration which was determined to transform Venezuela into the continent's largest steel producer. Rapid expansion, however, saddled the company with heavy debts in the form of short-term loans. More recently, the World Bank stepped

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in to temporarily rescue SIDOR but highly recommended privatization of certain operations. The steel workers' union, seeing the handwriting of mass layoffs on the wall, has adamantly opposed privatization. The upset victory by SIDOR's former president, Andrés Valásquez, in the December gubernatorial elections in the state where SIDOR is located represents a popular mandate to fight against privatization.

One of the union's elected officials, Ramón Machuca, told me in an interview that steel workers see privatization as tantamount to foreign takeover of one of the nation's most strategic industries. "It is our patriotic duty," he said, "to make sure that privatization does not go through. In this struggle we accept support even from SIDOR's current administration."

In contrast to SIDOR, labor relations in the rest of the nation have up until recently not been characterized by acute conflict. Now, however, workers in the public sector have taken the lead in protesting against deteriorating living standards. In the first four months of this year alone, IMF-imposed austerity in the form of budget slashing and plans for privatization have produced strikes among dock workers, court clerks, public health workers, doctors in state hospitals, grade school teachers, and university employees.

More worrisome than labor strife is the possibility that privatization schemes and resultant unemployment will contribute to a repetition of the violent disturbances which broke out during the week of February 27, 1989. The riots, in which a thousand people are said to have died, were a shocking experience for a country that has long been touted as Latin America's most stable democracy. The riots and the killings had a chilling effect on different sectors of public opinion. The nation's labor leadership, for instance, has distanced itself from the government, and this year organized marches throughout the nation in opposition to Peréz's austerity policies.

The Catholic church has also spoken out critically. An episcopal declaration drafted in the city of Los Teques strongly urged the government to reconsider its austerity measures, particularly the increase of prices of regulated goods. The statement added: "In the wake of all the squandering of immense wealth, we find ourselves in a situation of bankruptcy, government propaganda to the contrary. Those who exercise public power have to be the first to set an example of austerity and honesty."

Privatization cannot be considered a new strategy for Venezuela, much less "progressive," since it is a throwback to the period when business activity was off limits to the state. Those who advocate privatization ignore the main reason why the government stepped in in the first place—the private sector's reluctance to invest in strategic and basic industries. Most important, the defenders of privatization mechanically utilize arguments which are plausible for developed nations, without stopping to examine the twin dangers of privatization for underdeveloped economies: chronic unemployment and multinational domination.

STEVE ELLNER

Steve Ellner's articles on Latin American politics have appeared in numerous professional journals. He is the author of From Guerrilla Defeat to Innovative Politics: Venezuela's Movement Toward Socialism *(Duke University Press).*

WALKER PERCY: A TRIBUTE

THE NEWSWATCHER

THE TUBE & THE COSMOS

Just before dinner a friend called to report the news that Walker Percy had died (May 10) of cancer at his home in Covington, Louisiana. Percy was seventy-three. There was nothing for me to do, of course, except to say a prayer at his passing. I ate my dinner in silence, thinking about him all the while. Then, when I had finished, I did something completely Percyean, something so ordinary and yet so momentous that its momentousness is lost daily in its very ordinariness.

I watched the six o'clock national news on TV.

Not that I expected to see an obituary on Percy. At least not on prime time, the six o'clock report. Yet as I watched ABC's Peter Jennings recount the day's "major" events, the presence of Percy kept superimposing itself on the news stories, almost like one of those orbiting spirits that moves through his novels.

Segment One: President Bush on his way to Texas for a commencement exercise speech. He would have nothing to say about new taxes, the reporter on Air Force One stated, though the national debt is growing by millions every day. Instead, Bush announces to his college audience a goal to put Americans on Mars early in the next century. Estimated cost of this future venture? Perhaps $25 billion.

I kept thinking of Percy's *Lost in the Cosmos*, that wonderfully sardonic and brilliant prophecy of our times. We spend billions of dollars, Percy had shown, searching the cosmos for signs of extraterrestrial life and engaging in all sorts of "space exploration" (a phrase he would have laughed over), when in fact we know almost nothing about what it means to be a human being who must live in the world and die. Not to mention finding ways to help humanity deal with its real "lostness," our situation as dislocated journeyers in space, unmoored travelers whose spiritual hunger is so desperate that no amount of technical knowledge about space can ever appease it. A giddy thing indeed is this creature man, as Percy knew so well.

Segment Two: Jennings reports on racial and ethnic gang wars in Los Angeles. Many gang members, refugees from Latin America, laugh at "drive-by killings" (what would Percy the semiotician have done with that bit of Americanese!) because they're so accustomed to street shootouts, rocket and mortar attacks, planted bomb explosions, etc., from their own villages and cities back home.

California took the brunt of much of Percy's satiric wit. He saw it as the far edge of American nuttiness, the burnt-out hulk of the delusory American Dream, the end-all of the gnostic vision of utopia that is engrained in the American soul. That specious dream founders on the rocks of racial violence in *Love in the Ruins*, where Percy shows with darkness and humor that no plan of economic and social "equality" will solve our problem

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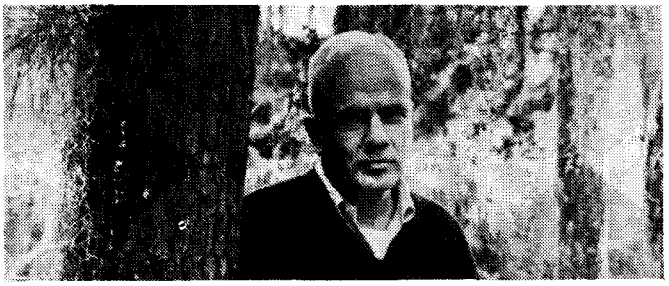

unless our hearts are changed.

Segment Three: Jewish graves desecrated in cemetery in France. A body mutilated. President Mitterand warns his countrymen against a new wave of anti-Semitism.

I thought about Percy's obsession with the meaning of the Jews, their significance as a people and a sign in history. Watching the tape of the desecrated graves, I remembered Fr. Smith's dire warning to Dr. Tom More in *The Thanatos Syndrome*—that if the "enlightened" scientists have their way in promoting a utopian "purified" society at all costs, they would "end up killing Jews" like the Nazis. Now it seems Jews are not even safe in death.

Segment Four: Reports claim that evangelist Oral Roberts may buy the PTL televangel ministry, formerly run by Jim and Tammy Bakker, for $6 million.

Percy loved to muse upon the sorry state of American religion in our times, especially Christianity in all its stripes. How badly it has failed us and we it, especially when we become shouting ideologues deaf to the simplicity and wonder of the gospel message.

In *Love in the Ruins*, Dr. Tom More is reminded that Jesus warned us not about dirty books but about "high places." And again it is Fr. Smith who warns Dr. More about "showing a bit of ordinary kindness to people, particularly our own families—unkindness to those close to us is such a pitiful thing—doing what we can for our poor unhappy country—things which... sometimes seem more important than dwelling on a few middle-aged daydreams."

Segment Five: Environmentalists fighting to protect the red squirrel as an endangered species against developers planning to build a giant telescope (to better "see" the cosmos?).

I stare at the tape of a tiny red squirrel perched on a fallen tree trunk. It sits on its haunches, broad tail pulsating up and down, tiny front paws holding an acorn. It turns the acorn busily, inspecting it with care, giving it a tap here and there with its teeth, its eyes bright and scrutinous as a gem inspector's. And I think about Percy's deep sense of wonder at the little things in creation, and how he had taught us to truly *see* them. The muted four o'clock afternoon sunlight on a bayou. The darting flight of robins, hawks, and martens. The funky drabness of old moviehouses and drive-ins. The shattered leavings of a meal of crabs, or an abandoned burnt-out shopping mall. The single blooming geranium, splendidly healthy, in the cell where children were exterminated by Nazi scientists. The severe metallic sculpture of the Holy Ghost roosting atop a New Orleans church. The unsentimental, funny, yet compassionate portraits of the maimed in body and spirit which he drew in novel after novel. And his infallible gift for creating that greatest human mystery—people *talking*—making words to name and locate themselves in this most dislocated of centuries.

Close: The six o'clock report was over and I started to turn off the TV. An ordinary news day, as they say. Nothing spectacular. Certainly nothing about the Good News Percy so joyously celebrated—no message in the bottle or strange sign from a voice of authority beyond the seas.

Or was there?

As the news credits rolled past, in the background the tiny red squirrel was still perched on a tree trunk, carefully inspecting the minute and intricate pattern of the acorn's crown, as if beholding a mystery still to be tapped. JOHN F. DESMOND

John F. Desmond, professor of English at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, has written on Percy for a number of reviews, including the Southern Quarterly.

OF SEVERAL MINDS John Garvey

PERSUASION PREFERRED

EDUCATING FOR CHOICE

"Every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before. And taking your life as a whole, with all your innumerable choices, all your life you are slowly turning this central thing into either a heavenly creature or into a hellish creature."—C. S. Lewis, *Christian Behaviour*

This quote, lifted from A. N. Wilson's very good new biography of C. S. Lewis, made me think of the use of choice as a moral category. The most obvious recent use has been by those who support the legal right of a woman to choose abortion under any circumstances, as opposed to those who would limit access to abortion to women whose lives are in some way endangered by pregnancy, or those who have suffered rape or incest. The possibility of civil dialogue has been limited here by prochoice people who refer to their opposite numbers as "antichoice," and by prolife people who refer to their opposite numbers as "antilife" or "pro-abortion." Rude folks, all of them, and letters from any of them (to the tune of "How can you not call them [fill in the blank—prodeath, antilife, antichoice—whatever insulting term you like]") will not be answered. Civility demands more respect for your opposite number's point of view than that, at least an assumption that she or he has assumed it in good faith. I stick

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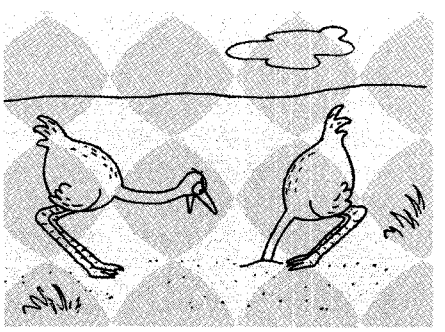
with "prolife" and "prochoice."

I have thought for a long time that prolife people should not concentrate on the legal arena but rather the area of persuasion. Law is coercive by nature, and coercion is a bad place to begin a discussion. I would like to suggest that rather than a concentration on what ought to be forbidden under force of the law, the emphasis should instead be on what it is we mean to encourage in our society—among families, within families (both stable and dissolving ones), and between families and the larger societal structures. Legal scholar Mary Ann Glendon has pointed out that the United States has the most permissive abortion laws in the industrial West and at the same time offers the least help to women and children. She sees a connection between these sad facts. I am sure she is right.

The prochoice movement has reacted to attempts to limit access to abortion as if they were morally equivalent to earlier attempts to limit access to contraception, and as if there were a simple sort of moralistic and religiously inspired continuum here; but this ignores the interesting and conveniently forgotten fact that Planned Parenthood once opposed abortion as a form of baby-killing, an evil that resulted from limiting access to contraception. Planned Parenthood's earlier opposition to abortion has been well-documented and the organization really ought to deal with it more honestly. Fat chance of that, as long as the uncivil people on both sides prevail. In the meantime, hundreds of thousands of abortions continue, there is not enough simple honesty about family planning in official Catholic quarters, and most people in our truly weird culture stand around doing nothing, as if the issue were a merely religious quarrel, or embarrassing. Until relatively recently this silent crowd included a number of my Orthodox coreligionists; now several of our bishops have begun speaking more publicly about abortion, and are active in the prolife movement, as are a growing number of Orthodox clergy and laypeople. But when Michael Dukakis was running for president, there was not a word forthcoming from Greek Orthodox Archbishop Iakovos about the inappropriateness of Dukakis's prochoice stand. If Catholic prelates have sometimes been intemperate in their attacks on prochoice Catholic politicians, the alternative is not silence on an important moral issue about which the church has a definite teaching.

There was an outcry from a number of prochoice people when the Catholic bishops announced an expensive public relations campaign to try to persuade people that our society's approach to abortion is wrong. Many people on both sides of the issue argued that the money would better be spent on direct help to women and children. They have a point there, but they lose me when they act as if there were something inherently evil about the use of advertising or public relations. They also miss the fact that the prochoice movement has achieved considerable successes using precisely the medium of advertising and public relations. One of those successes has been in convincing a large number of people that the primary issue here is choice, as if the simple freedom to choose were in itself a moral category, one so important as to eclipse completely the question of the fetal life (which is surely human life, even if its personhood can be philosophically questioned).

While freedom of choice may indeed be an important political principle, it is not in and of itself moral. I have the legal right to spend all day reading dreadful romances or watching television, to name two brain-rotting activities, or I may drink myself to death, or believe in racist theories. All of these options are mine to choose. Of course, I should not choose them—but I may do so. None of them are good choices, though laws forbidding me to do any of them would be dangerous. Under current U.S. law a woman may choose to have an abortion. I think it can be argued that someone who opposes abortion personally may still support prochoice legislation, on the lesser-of-two-evils principle; this has not yet been argued well, by Governor Cuomo or anyone else who takes that position, but I think it could be done.



"Okay! Let's talk about something less controversial!"

Nevertheless, abortion is at the very least a brutal form of retroactive contraception, and does in fact destroy a life which in another instance might be cherished. It is important for anyone who believes this to try to communicate that belief, whatever the legality of the choice might be. In the case of people seeking to lead, it is not only important—it is an obligation, one that has not been met by people afraid of elections, and the reason it has not is, pretty obviously, a combination of moral cowardice and amoral ambition. In a confused climate—confused not least by politicians more eager to follow poll results than to take the risks real leadership involves—I can see why the Catholic bishops have turned to public relations. They should not be faulted for turning to professionals. Who should they turn to? Those of their own number who, through ill-considered denunciations of prochoice Catholic candidates, have managed to get them elected?

I do hope, though, that the campaign is centered not on legislative issues, but on the attempt to persuade people that abortion is not a humane decision, in the great majority of cases. Pharmaceutical technology may make the whole issue irrelevant at the legislative level. It will remain an important moral choice, and if the Catholic bishops have not been able to get that message across by other means, I really can't fault them for trying this one. The point should be to suggest that, however important the legal right to choose may be, the things we choose to do, or refuse to do, define us as individuals and as a society. The widespread choice of abortion is a tragedy, something the most vocal prochoice people either ignore or downplay. But the choice of abortion exists for complex reasons which too many prolife people have ignored. A recent *New York Times* story mentions the efforts of Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee who, on this subject and a number of others, listened to the concerns of women in his diocese and responded with more sensitivity than we have been accustomed to from either side of the issue. If the proposed campaign is conducted in this spirit, it will be a genuine advance. □

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J. Bryan Hehir

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE PAST

OLD QUESTIONS FOR A NEW EUROPE

Writing on international affairs, and particularly on European politics, is risky business in 1990. Neither computers, television, nor FAX technology are insurance against one's best predictions being overtaken by events. The major themes of postwar European political life have been simultaneously in flux: superpower relations, political and economic integration, and the German question. At the beginning of the 1980s, all three bore the somewhat depressing stability the cold war had imposed upon them; at the outset of the 1990s all three promise fundamental developments in the next ten years.

Superpower relations are highlighted by summitry. The recent summit, like its predecessors since 1985, was centered on arms control. Writing just before the summit in the *New York Times*, Thomas Friedman reported the comment of one diplomat that arms control is "yesterday's issue." Well—yes and no. There is no question that political changes within the Soviet Union and between the superpowers have reduced the daily danger of the relationship; in this sense nuclear weapons do not loom as large. But improved political relations have not, as yet, reduced the stock of twenty-four thousand strategic nuclear weapons possessed by the superpowers. Only these two states can move to cut and contain the nuclear danger in the world. That task is an imperative which should not be cavalierly described as yesterday's business. Today's politics offer opportunities which other generations in the cold war only dreamed of.

Change in superpower relations generates change in European politics. The June superpower summit will be followed by a July NATO summit, where the identity, purpose, and structure of the alliance will come under review. The European states undertake this review of their security status while simultaneously moving forward with economic integration in a fashion which points toward political change after 1992. These twin developments in the security and economic spheres put Europe back at the center of international diplomacy, particularly since both the economic and security future of Europe will be worked out in tandem with the process of political unification of Germany. The "old questions" of Europe are being addressed again as the "new Europe" takes shape.

The new Europe's evolution has been profoundly influenced by an ancient voice of European history—the papacy in the person of John Paul II. There is a consensus among analysts about the role of the pope in Eastern Europe. The judgment is captured by Timothy Garton Ash, author of *The Uses of Adversity: Essays on the Fate of Central Europe* (Random House, 1989) and editor of the recent *Daedalus* volume on Central Europe (Winter 1990). Ash describes the pope's first visit to Poland (1979) as the beginning of the end of Communist rule in Eastern Europe: "The pope's visit was followed just over a year later by the birth of Solidarity, and without the pope's visit it is doubtful there would have been a Solidarity.... If there is any truth in this judgment, then there was something especially fitting in the fact that it was in 1989 that the Russian leader and the Polish pope finally met. In their very different ways, they both started it."

The papal role in Eastern Europe is universally recognized. What is less noticed in secular commentary is the perspective of John Paul II on the future of Europe. Almost a decade before the Berlin Wall was breached, the pope was calling Europeans of East and West to think and act in terms of a European Europe. Professor George H. Williams, whose exegesis of papal thinking is unparalleled in its scope and depth, concludes that John Paul's conception of Europe is "a third force between the Soviet Union and North America—cultural, spiritual, and necessarily military." Without trying to spell out Williams's view of a "third force," it is clear that the papal perspective is distinctive—different from Mr. Gorbachev's "European House" (which has the Soviets in it) and from the current U.S. focus on NATO.

The papal conception certainly entails a Europe relating to the superpowers, but it affirms a European independence which has a Gaullist character to its scope and status in the world. The pope's addresses for a decade have stressed the historical, cultural, and religious foundations of European unity—a preparation for the political and economic integration which would allow Europe to assume again a major diplomatic role in the world.

In the 1980s the pope's comments about a united Europe seemed beyond the reach of political reality, particularly since he often stressed the unity of East and West Europe. In the 1990s his conception is the common property of intellectuals, diplomats, and commentators. In the 1980s he addressed European unity as a goal to be held up as a possibility. In the 1990s he is clearly ready to lead the church as a participant in the construction of a new Europe. The sign of his intentions is the synod of European bishops which he announced during his visit to Czechoslovakia.

While the subject-matter of the synod is yet to be determined, the animating vision was perhaps already stated in one of the pope's addresses in Czechoslovakia: "A united Europe is no longer a dream: It is not a utopian memory from the Middle Ages. The events which we are witnessing show that this goal can actually be reached....This process is not and cannot be only a political and economic event; it has profound cultural, spiritual, and moral dimensions." The European synod is likely only the first step John Paul has in mind for the new Europe. □

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WHY THE THIRD WORLD GOES HUNGRY

SELLING CHEAP & BUYING DEAR

KATHY McAFEE

More of the world's people are hungry today than ever before. The World Bank has estimated that as many as 950 million people are "chronically malnourished": too hungry to lead active, productive lives. That's nearly one person in five worldwide. According to United Nations figures, more than 15 million children die each year of malnutrition and related sickness. Most of these hunger-related deaths, whether of children or adults, occur in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean—the global South, or third world. It has been calculated that food deprivation causes as many deaths in a year as would a Hiroshima-size atomic bomb dropped somewhere in the third world every two or three days.

Most of these deaths are needless. More than enough food is grown to feed everyone on earth. The World Resources Institute reports that if all the food produced were distributed equitably throughout the world, it could provide an adequate diet for nearly six billion people—one billion more than now live on the planet. More than half this bounty is grown in the third world. The UN Food and Agricultural Organization has documented that food production during the past twenty-five years has outpaced population growth in every major region except Africa south of the Sahara desert. But those who need this food—and who do most of the work of producing it—are often not the ones who consume it.

Some analysts, including Lester Brown and John Young of the Worldwatch Institute, warn that global population growth may soon begin to exceed the rate of increase of world food production—this as the result of erosion, deforestation, and other consequences of policies and practices that undermine the planet's capacity for producing food and fresh water. Their predictions may prove true, but that does not mean we can solve the problem of hunger by limiting population growth. Famine exists now, when there is food enough to feed the world. Unless we understand why today's surplus does not reach the needy, and until we do something about it, we will not be able to avert more widespread starvation in any future context of scarcity. Moreover, as explained below (point No. 7), the same factors that lead to hunger also serve to degrade the environment in many places.

Hunger makes news during severe regional famines, when cameras portray hundreds of thousands sinking toward death. But if the existence of chronic hunger in a world of abundance is rarely acknowledged, its root causes are even less understood. News media report emergency food shipments, foreign aid grants, private and governmental loans from the developed countries, leading us to assume that by these measures the rich countries are sustaining the battered economies of the third world. The opposite is closer to the truth. In the movement of wealth around the world, far more flows *out of* impoverished countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America and *into* the richer economies of Europe, North America, and Japan. Every year since 1986, according to an estimate by the Overseas Development Council, at least $43 billion in net financial resources has been transferred from the global South to the North. The estimate is conservative; others put the South's net loss higher.

The measurable portion of this hemorrhage is made up in large part of debt payments. UNICEF reports that in 1988 would-be developing countries had to channel $178 billion to Northern nations to meet their debt bills. The total external debt of the third world is a crushing $1.2 trillion. In 1987, low- and middle-income governments paid out $102 billion in interest alone—3.4 times the total development assistance from all aid-giving nations. Other components of the measurable flow are the profits claimed by foreign owners of third-world businesses, and the deposits by the South's elite in Northern banks.

Other resources flow unseen, like underground rivers, in the same direction; they are harder to calculate, but very real. The mineral and agricultural products transferred out of Latin America, Asia, and Africa are vital to the global economy, but the prices paid for them do not begin to reflect their practical usefulness, or the profits they make possible for shippers, processors, and speculative commodity traders in the North. So also with the value added to garments, gadgets, and other goods assembled in export processing zones of the third world; workers

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there earn a small fraction of the wages paid to those doing comparable factory work in the North.

Still more unseen wealth is drained from the third world by illegal or semilegal means. Corporations disguise the removal of profits through the shady accounting practices of transfer pricing; individuals add to capital flight by smuggling out hard currency into foreign bank accounts. Tremendous sums are accumulated in the North at the expense of the South through the international drug trade. Andean peasants, many of whom can no longer find an adequate income alternative to growing coca leaves, receive a tiny fraction of the immense wealth gathered by the cocaine industry bosses, who use banks and corporate fronts in the U.S., Europe, and the Caribbean to launder their earnings.

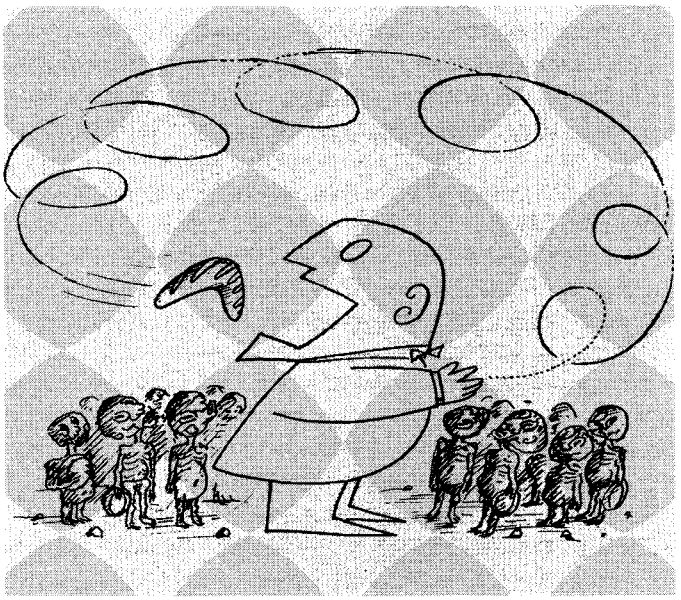
Cumulatively, these massive transfers of wealth from the impoverished third world to the comparatively affluent industrialized nations constitute the most important underlying cause of third-world poverty and hunger. The poor of the third world are being integrated into a global economy in which allocation of food is determined by market criteria. It is a skewed system, as different as could be from the free and competitive model imagined by Adam Smith. In the only markets to which poor people of the third world have access, they have no control over trading terms, interest rates, investment choices, or the other rules of the game. Increasingly, those with greater control edge out those with less. The consequence is that millions of farmers are being deprived of resources they need to raise food for themselves and their communities: land, water, tools, draft animals, credit, traditional knowledge, and structures of community cohesion and support.

All this is happening in a variety of ways.

1. *The expansion of export agriculture and commercial farming.* Wealthy countries have imported products like coffee, tea, and chocolate from the third world since the days of colonialism. Imports of such tropical products are still increasing; growing still faster are imports of foods like canned fish and meat, fresh fruits and vegetables, and fibers such as cotton—all products that can be produced in temperate climates but that can be raised and harvested more cheaply (or during winter) in the third world. The rich countries are also increasing their purchases of crops such as soybeans from Brazil, peanuts from West Africa, cassava from Thailand—foods that could nourish hungry people in the countries where they are grown, but are fed instead to livestock in rich countries.

Little of the money earned by these sales goes to the primary producers. In the fertile lowlands of Central America, for instance, peasants once grew crops that provided a nutritious diet: corn, beans, melons, squash, tomatoes, and chilis. Today, cattle ranches and plantations growing export crops such as sugar, coffee, cotton, and bananas cover much of this land.

The very profitability of third-world commercial crops has hurt rather than helped the poor. It has contributed to increased prices and rents for land, and to higher costs for irrigation equipment, fertilizers, and pesticides. Subsistence farmers who cannot



afford these increased costs are being displaced by commercial growers. Half the farmers in the third world have access to less than 2.5 acres, often not enough to support a family. One-third of all rural third-world households have no access to land at all. Many peasants who have lost their farms now work as laborers on the same land they once owned, often earning too little to buy enough staples for an adequate diet. Other farmers, displaced by tractors and threshing machines, can find no work at all in rural areas, and must seek jobs in the third world's swelling cities, or abroad.

2. *Government policies and aid programs that increase dependency.* In many parts of the third world, land, wealth, and political power are concentrated in the hands of an elite. Efforts by farmers to resist displacement from their land, to gain access to land through land reform or, when that fails, through land occupations, are frequently met with repression that precipitates an escalating cycle of violence. Even where the poor have broader access to land, many governments provide farm loans, irrigation, seeds, and technical assistance for cash crops, but not for subsistence farming or local and regional marketing of food crops.

Few large-scale international aid projects are designed to promote local food production, and those that are food-related often result in increased dependency. Farming methods developed in Europe and the U.S. favor the relatively few landowners who can afford fertilizers, pesticides, machinery, and fuel. Over the past three decades, moreover, the bulk of development aid has not been for farming to meet local needs but for projects like large dams, ports, and power plants, or for export crops. Much of this aid money ends up in the bank accounts of contractors and consultants from the donor nations. Often, the aid is in the form of loans, but most of these expensive projects have failed to generate enough income to pay off the loans.

3. *Structures of dependency.* Although many third-world countries became politically independent during the three decades following World War II, most remained economically subordinate. They had inherited political and economic structures

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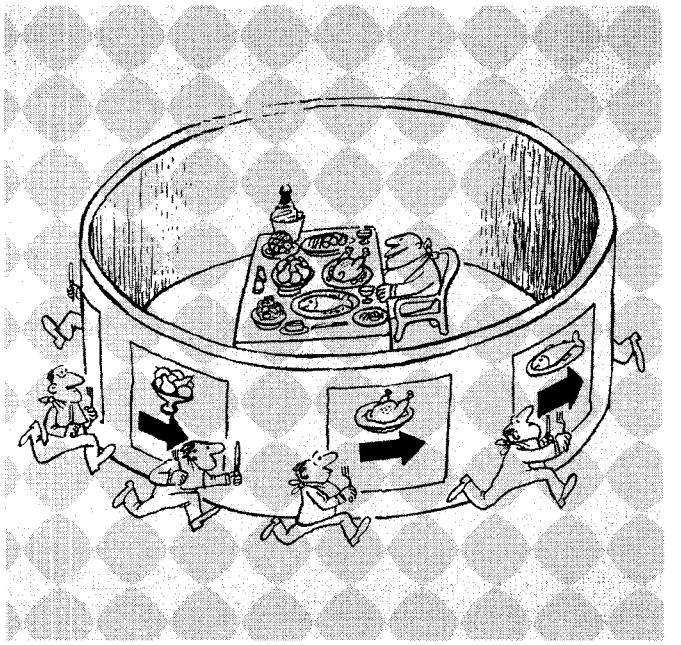
established to facilitate the transfer of raw materials to the colonial powers or other industrialized countries. For example: Roads, railroads, and communications lines, where they exist, generally link interior areas to port cities, but do not run between cities and towns, or even between countries in the interior of Southern continents. The goods removed via these routes were, and still are, processed and manufactured into finished goods in the nations of the global North, or in refineries and factories owned by foreign corporations. Thus, the phases of production which add the most value to—and raise the prices of—most goods that are traded internationally take place outside the territories and economies of the South. The prices of unprocessed commodity exports—crops and minerals—have been declining; most are at a forty-five-year low. Meanwhile, these same countries must purchase finished goods—trucks, steel, factory-made consumer goods—from the industrialized countries, at constantly rising prices.

4. *Third-world debt.* During the 1960s and 1970s, Western banks and governments encouraged third-world countries to borrow billions of dollars to make up the difference between their export incomes and their import expenses. The theory was that foreign financial fueling would enable Southern countries to "take off" on their own toward industrialization. Economic growth, it was said, would generate the funds needed to repay the loans.

It didn't happen. Because of the inequities built into global systems of production and trade, the third world continued to sell cheap and buy dear. Typically, countries which borrowed once soon had to borrow again. In 1973 and again in 1978, rising oil prices contributed to a massive increase in third-world debt. Non-oil-producing countries in the South had to double or triple their borrowing just to keep their economies going at pre-1970 levels. Then—also in the late 1970s—third-world debt bills rose sharply in response to a dramatic increase in interest rates. Many commercial bank loans to Southern countries were made at "floating" interest rates. When those interest rates rise, debt bills mushroom. A 1-percent increase in interest rates automatically adds $700 million to Mexico's annual debt bill. The World Bank calculated that interest rates affecting third-world borrowers rose 30 percent in just two years (1980-1982).

As interest rates soared, debtor nations were pressed by banks and international lending agencies to take on new loans just to keep up the interest payments on their previous loans. By 1983, 79 cents of each new dollar borrowed by Latin American nations was used solely to pay interest on past loans. Two-thirds of Latin America's export earnings were being consumed by debt payments.

Under pressure from their creditors, most indebted countries have increased the volume of their exports to make up for the lower prices they receive for them. Throughout the South, governments invite investors to fell more forests, mine more mountains, plow up pastures, drain wetlands, and replace staple foods with export crops. But worldwide competition among exporters of grains, other foods, minerals, and fibers has resulted in even lower prices for these commodities, and thus in lower incomes for many farmers (including some in the United States), and a



decline rather than an increase in the earnings from exports by third-world nations.

5. *IMF-sponsored economic austerity.* As a consequence of their debts, many countries of the South have become subject to the economic stewardship of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Both institutions were established by the victorious industrialized nations in the aftermath of World War II. The purpose of the IMF, as established in its charter, is to promote the continuation and expansion of international trade according to "free market" principles. In line with this mandate, the IMF extends loans at close-to-market interest rates to countries faced with balance-of-trade and payments deficits. These loans are intended as short- to medium-term measures to tide countries over until they can balance their books by bringing expenditures into line with earnings.

It is customary to think of IMF's mission as a form of aid from the North to the South. More accurately, the IMF serves the international financial system and reinforces the system's underlying power relations. Thus, in practice, the IMF acts as a sort of "economic policeman" on behalf of commercial banks, Northern governments, and other international lending agencies. Indebted countries that are unable or unwilling to take IMF loans, repay them on schedule, and adopt economic policy changes acceptable to the Fund are often unable to obtain longer-term development loans, or even short-term credit to import desperately needed food, fuel, medicines, and spare parts for machinery.

IMF practices do not address the causes of third-world poverty, and IMF loans have done little to reduce overall debts. More often, they have contributed to increased debts as borrowing countries have been forced to take on loans from other sources to meet strictly enforced IMF repayment schedules and IMF-required targets for economic growth. Meanwhile, IMF austerity programs aimed at bringing about "stabilization" have severely weakened many third-world economies. As a condition of loans, the IMF requires recipient countries to adopt policies to increase

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their export earnings and simultaneously to reduce government spending on social services and most other programs not geared toward increasing exports. This means cuts in education, health care, nutrition programs, agricultural extension services, and environmental monitoring. Often it entails reduction or elimination of subsidies many Southern governments have used to keep food prices affordable for the poor of their nations, and thereby to keep a lid on social unrest. Many IMF programs call for devaluation of the borrowing country's currency as well. This makes the devaluing country's exports cheaper—and, in theory, more competitive—on global markets, and discourages imports by making them more expensive for the borrowing country.

But these same measures also lead to immediate and often drastic increases in the prices of food, transportation, and basic consumer goods. By making credit and imported inputs impossibly expensive while opening local markets to foreign competition, they frequently put local farms and factories out of business, adding to massive unemployment. By reducing social services, they increase the pressures on women and others who care for children, the elderly, and the infirm. In brief, IMF policies serve to shift the burden of debt repayment onto those least able to bear it, and thus to deplete the human capital on which development depends.

6. *World Bank failures.* The World Bank has come to play an even more important role than the IMF in directing the development policies of Southern governments. The Bank makes longer-term loans, sometimes at lower interest rates, intended to promote economic growth and trade through private enterprise. World Bank loans are increasingly geared toward export production, both in agriculture and in low-wage industries. Before the 1980s, most World Bank loans funded the construction of roads, ports, dams, power plants, and large-scale agricultural export projects. During the past decade, Bank priorities shifted. Today, about a quarter of the Bank's loans to the South are "sectoral adjustment" or "structural adjustment" loans. These loans finance economic reprogramming that alters not only the external trade policies but also the internal economic priorities of indebted countries.

Structural and sectorial adjustment programs redirect resources away from domestic needs. They require impoverished countries to reduce taxes on the wealthy, increase taxation of the working majority, sell land and other public assets to private owners, devalue their currencies further, raise still higher the prices of transportation and many food items, keep wages low, and offer tax breaks and cheap factory space and services to foreign manufacturers.

Structural adjustment programs rest on the theory that countries adopting them will be able to work their way out of debt through economic growth that will generate income to finance development and pay off debts, and, not incidentally, prevent banks in the rich countries from collapsing. In reality, largely as a consequence of structural adjustment and related export-promotion policies, more resources—food, minerals, labor power, and money—are flowing out of the third world to the wealthiest countries than ever before. Capital for local development is not accumulating but dwindling.

Structural adjustment programs are not working, even on their own terms. Their failure to promote sustainable growth and equitable development has been publicly recognized by a wide range of institutions and observers, including the UN's Economic Commission on Africa, the *New York Times*, and the U.S. Catholic Conference's administrative board in its statement on third-world debt (September, 1989). Even the World Bank's own chief economist stated in March that the bank intends to reduce its structural adjustment lending. (Its export emphasis, however, is unlikely to change.)

7. *Farming practices that damage the environment.* The pressure to increase export crops production and the lack of other ways of earning income compel growing numbers of farmers to adopt agricultural practices that undermine the long-term productivity of the land. The greatly increased use of chemical fertilizers often depletes the soil. Excessive employment of pesticides creates toxic hazards for present and future generations.

Peasants displaced from high-quality farmlands by commercial producers often have no choice but to try to raise food or cash crops on land not suitable for continuous farming. Cultivation of steep hillsides results in soil erosion. On the dry plains of Africa's Sahel, soil plowed to plant cotton and peanuts is quickly turned to dust by desert winds. In Amazonia and other moist tropical regions, thin rainforest soils that are too frequently replanted quickly lose their fertility. The same thing happens when good farm land is overcultivated, without fallow years and without replacement of organic matter removed from the soil. Under such conditions, the harder farmers work over the years, the less they get for their labor. Few would choose to farm such unfriendly fields if they had other ways to survive.

The incentive to conserve dwindles as the distance increases between those who produce food and those who control food-producing resources. Decision-makers in bank and aid agency board rooms seldom confront the consequences of their actions, which alter the lives and landscapes of millions. Neither do most reporters and financial analysts who cover these matters. Yet Northern pressure on Southern governments to produce quick cash for debt repayment virtually insures that third-world lands will not be developed or preserved in the interest of the majority.

8. *Militarization and war.* World-wide military spending has doubled over the past twenty years to more than $800 billion yearly. The amount spent every minute could feed two thousand malnourished children for a year. From 1977 to 1987 the third world's share of the global arms budget increased from 9 percent to 16 percent, draining resources that could be used to combat poverty and hunger. UNICEF has reported that third-world countries spent $145 billion in 1988 on weapons and armies.

There have been more than 130 wars since 1945, nearly all of them in the third world. These "conventional" wars have killed about 25 million people, made millions more into permanent refugees, and caused incalculable damage to third-world economies and environments. Third-world militarization is a result as well as a cause of increasing hunger: many third-world

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governments have come to power in the wake of food riots or other forms of mass protest against falling living standards. Enforcement of adjustment programs that multiply human misery will require increased coercion, repression, and military intervention.

9. *Ethnic and religious oppression.* Conquest and exploitation of some peoples by others, long a part of human history, acquired a new dimension in the colonial era. European powers carved what we now call the third world into colonies, creating states that did not correspond to existing political boundaries, dividing linguistic and cultural groups across arbitrary borders, and giving certain ethnic and religious groups new or greater power over others.

Where there is hunger today in the third world, all do not hunger equally. Members of oppressed castes, tribal groups, and religions often have less access to food-producing resources and government assistance, and are more likely to have to go without food. Indigenous people in Latin America and minority ethnic groups in Africa and Asia are among those who suffer most as policies to speed debt payments increase the pressure on their lands.

10. *Discrimination against women.* Although in many parts of the South women are the main food producers, more women than men suffer from malnutrition. Though women head one out of three third-world households, and perform an estimated two-thirds of all hours worked, it is women and girls who starve most often. Four times as many malnourished children are female than male, and their mortality rate is 40 percent higher than that of boys. In many societies in times of plenty, men and boys eat first; in times of famine, women and girls may not eat at all. Nutritional anemia affects about half of all third-world women of child-bearing age, draining their strength and lessening their resistance to disease.

The effect of modernization in many rural third-world areas has been to worsen the situation of women. Commercialization of agriculture in societies where men hold land titles and money means less control by women over family resources and food distribution. Mechanization of plowing and harvesting often means a loss of income for women, since agricultural loans and technology are often made available only to men. Efforts to accumulate quick cash for debt repayments accelerate these processes.

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Thus the causes of world hunger are at once multiple and unitary; that is to say, systemic. They are deeply rooted and well protected; though needless hunger is a scandal, it is a hidden one, and ending it is not seen by the elites of North or South as serving their interests.

Yet there is cause for hope: North and South, a great many Davids are confronting their respective Goliaths, and, to an extent, they are learning to collaborate across borders toward achievement of common goals: to reduce hunger, eliminate its causes, bring about sustainable, broad-based development, and achieve a more just distribution of the world's resources. Linkages are most evident in the partnerships between nongovernment organizations engaged in self-help projects in the third world and private agencies in the North that provide these projects with modest funding and people-to-people publicity and support. Examples in the U.S. include Oxfam America, Food First, the American Friends Service Committee, Grassroots International, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Catholic Relief Services, Food for the Poor, and Global Exchange.

Compared with the mega-projects financed by the World Bank or U.S. AID, these projects are small in scale: a women's cooperative processing local fruit, a community poultry-rearing project, an old cargo boat renovated to carry crops to market, to list some carried out by project partners of Oxfam America. Other projects are adopting new methods of conservation and reviving old ones, building small-scale irrigation works and better food storage facilities, organizing production and marketing co-ops, expanding women's income-generating activities: weaving, dairying, farming. They are developing literacy and skills-training programs, and making use of radio, popular theater, and creative new forms of research, education, and communication to enhance their understanding of the causes of poverty and the means of improving their lives.

The importance of such projects is partly that they provide a testing ground for development models—at their best, they embody or prefigure elements of an alternative and achievable definition of development—and partly that they are conceived and carried out by the aid beneficiaries themselves. In the process, participants strengthen their technical and leadership skills, confidence, the ability to identify problems and plan solutions.

In the context of an overall drain of resources out of the global South, even successful local projects cannot engender development by themselves. Understanding of this reality is spreading, however, and in consequence grassroots and nongovernment organizations in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean have begun to form regional and international organizations such as the Malaysia-based Third World Network and the women's organization, DAWN, with offices in Mexico, India, and Brazil. These, along with local, national, and regional organizations

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of farmers, women, workers, indigenous and minority peoples, certain scholars, and some government officials, have begun to formulate experience-based alternatives to the failing debt-financed, export-dominated model of development. Central to the goals being articulated with increasing clarity and unanimity by progressive third-world NGOs is increased food production for local and regional needs. They also hope to promote more South-South trade, closer agro-industry links, more use of local materials and skills, more control by Southern nations over the prices of their exports, greater involvement and consultation of farmers and others affected by development schemes; in a phrase, more workable and more genuinely democratic development. Needless to say, relief from the debt burden is a prior condition of progress.

For that reason, and because the "aid" policies of national governments in the North and the international lending agencies constitute the major obstacles to third- world development, local and regional groups in the South are asking citizens of wealthier nations for support. They are asking not for charity in the form of food shipments, but for change. Northern policies that require Southern governments to negotiate structural adjustment programs one by one and that enforce a strategy of exports-at-any-cost rule out alternative strategies based on self-reliance and regional cooperation. Insistence on drastic reduction of public services for the sake of meeting debt schedules saps human capital. Such policies, third-world groups contend, harm the long-term interests of the majority of citizens in the North as well as the South. Farmers who cannot sell their crops, workers who cannot earn a living wage, the growing numbers with no land or job at all cannot be good customers for Northern products. Governments that respond to the unrest of their impoverished peoples with military violence cannot be reliable allies.

As already noted, development and development education agencies in the U.S. are responding to this call by entering into new relationships with third-world groups that replace almsgiving with partnership. In addition, some environmental organizations, such as the Environmental Defense Fund, are coming to recognize that saving the natural environment is impossible if it entails destroying the livelihoods of the people who inhabit rain forests and other threatened areas. Religiously motivated lobbying groups—in particular, Bread for the World—carry out extensive research on the causes of hunger and the impact of U.S. policies. Church-based organizations, under the multi-denominational umbrella of Interfaith Action for Economic Justice, are paying attention to alternative development proposals from the third world. So also are public policy organizations such as Development GAP and Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America (PACCA). And, across the country, citizens are forging links among towns, churches, and trade unions in Southern Africa and Central America and their U.S. counterparts. By supporting efforts like these, we can help the people of the South to overcome hunger and develop along their own chosen pathways. We can also help to avert ecological disasters of great consequence, and to prevent replacement of the East-West cold war by a devastating global struggle between the North and the South. □

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LITURGY & LAWNS

CRABGRASS HAS ITS PLACE

PEGGY ROSENTHAL

Saturday had been one of those days. My husband, discouraged by the crabgrass killing our new lawn, went to the garden store for help and came home sick at finding out what poisons he'd have to use to attack it and even sicker at trying to figure out whether he cared about crabgrass at all. I meanwhile was being overrun by internal crabgrass, that premenstrual crabbiness which feels as if it's smothering and even clawing out any hope of tender green delight. The mail then brought me two professional frustrations: a favorite article rejected, and a letter from a scholar saying she hadn't a clue how to answer a source-question I'd counted on her expertise for. My husband and I began our planned afternoon gardening without our usual enthusiasm for it. I couldn't decide where to set the foxglove seedlings and left him to plant them alone while I divided perennials elsewhere. When he was done and ready to transplant a new shrub to give it more room, I told him where to put it and went back to my dividing. I walked by him just as he was watering it in, saw that he'd put it too close to the ferns, and ungraciously said so. By dinner it was clear to us both that we were having a rare spell of getting on each other's nerves. We knew that none of the things obsessing us mattered, yet knowing this wasn't enough to free us from them. We needed liturgy.

Fortunately, we'd already planned to go to Sunday Mass at the Trappist monastery thirty miles from home. Celebrating Mass there is different for us than celebrating it at our parish, in two main ways. The pace at the monastery is much slower. Pauses for reflection are spread throughout the liturgy, and the psalms of Terce precede the Mass, so that the whole liturgy lasts more than an hour and a half. And our participation there is confined to the responses of the people. At our parish, we usually help lead the liturgy in some way or other. My husband cantors. I fill in as lector or eucharistic minister when needed. Lay responsibility in liturgy is a must and a joy; I'm certainly not arguing against it. But there's an experience of liturgy that one can't have when responsible for helping get it done, the experience of letting it happen.

At this Sunday's Mass, it happened. We were given what we needed. The order of Mass. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Glory to God in the highest. A reading from the Book of....Listening, watching, responding with body and voice as one people, anonymously and by rote. Liturgy's ritual gift of taking one out of oneself, putting things in perspective.

Taking, *putting*: there's wisdom in the active forcefulness of the verbs here. Like many other clichés, these became and remain clichés because they express widely acknowledged truths and values. The psychological truth in this case is that our self would just as soon stay wrapped up in itself, cozily enclosed with whatever things are its private obsession; it's not about to get out on its own. The value acknowledged in the idioms is that such self-enclosure is bad. Having things out of perspective is serious business. As Simone Weil describes the devastating situation, with her usual unflinching severity: we're "incapable of discerning a single object or directing a single step" as long as we remain stuck in our illusory world of which we imagine ourselves the center.

God is of course our real center. And moving to this center—no, letting ourselves be so moved—is all we need for our vision of everything to be utterly transformed. (That's why mystics' momentary release from illusory self is called a "vision.") God is always ready and eager to pull us into his transforming presence. *He* doesn't need liturgy for this, but *we* sometimes do. The Lord be with you. And he is. Sometimes just hearing it is enough. God's *being* with us is the perspective that puts all things in their place—their place which is *in* his being. Glory to you, Lord.

Though liturgy isn't the only means by which this radical shift of perspective is offered us, enacting God's transforming presence is liturgy's special work. I like that the Greek word for "work," *ergos*, is at the root meaning of the term "liturgy." Liturgy performs its deepest rooted work—rooted more deeply, even, than crabgrass—whether or not our moods and minds of the moment permit the desired psychological effect. Actually, knowing that liturgy's work doesn't depend on our feelings can help release the appropriate feelings. Maybe by taking the pressure off. We believe in one God, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. And we believe even when our attention wanders from the profession we speak. Blessed be God for*ever*.

On this particular Sunday, I'd guess I paid attention to 70 percent of the Mass. For me that's about as good as it gets, and I'm always grateful for any degree of attentiveness to liturgy. I think freedom from distractions is a gift that comes or doesn't.

PEGGY ROSENTHAL *is the author of* Words and Values: Some Leading Words and Where They Lead Us *(Oxford University Press)*.

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I suspect, though, that I feel partly responsible for my distractions, since I cringe at my most scandalous ones. I confess to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have caught myself at the Memorial Acclamation realizing that I spent the Consecration discerning whether I should get my hair cut like the woman sitting in front of me. Lord, I am not worthy indeed.

But only say the word and I shall be healed. At liturgy we all say and hear the words that heal us all. We can count on these words to be said. We hope we'll hear them in our hearts. We're disappointed when we don't, but not despairing; we're grateful when we do. At the kiss of peace, my husband and I squeezed hands in thanks that we had—not "made up," but been made up.

The experience I've been describing—of being healed through liturgy, of having the order of Mass put things in their place—certainly isn't unique. I assume it's as common as crabgrass, though received with exactly the opposite response. Thanks be to God. □

SCREEN

BAD COP, BAD COP

LUMET'S 'Q & A'

I usually rejoice when a moviemaker strives for dramatic fullness, but Sidney Lumet's *Q&A* is downright congested. The movie is so stuffed with plot twists, unwieldy exposition, hasty explanations, and both necessary and unnecessary displays of violence that it bursts its dramatic seams.

The first thiry minutes or so are exciting precisely because the turbulent subject matter appears to be under tight directorial control. When a Puerto Rican tough is killed by a plainclothes cop, young Assistant D.A. Riley (Timothy Hutton) is put in charge of the "Q&A" (question-and-answer investigation) of the case. "Remember," his superior tells him, "the Q&A defines all that happened. If it's not in the Q&A, it didn't happen." Pressure is quickly put on the decent but ambitious greenhorn to clear the investigated detective, Brennan (Nick Nolte), who as the audience already knows, did not act in self-defense but murdered.

Fine, we tell ourselves, this movie is going to have focus. Despite administrative coercion and against the grain of his own ambition, our protagonist will struggle toward the truth through a series of confrontations between himself (backed by two police aides) and all those involved in the crime. And since "the Q&A defines all that happens," what transpires in the interrogation room will define the drama.

An alertly prowling camera in a roomful of talented actors can result in dynamite cinema. For proof, just recall two other Sidney Lumet movies, *Twelve Angry Men* and *Murder on the Orient Express*. And our interest mounts in *Q&A* as the interrogation gets under way and the film's main themes are sounded. The investigators all know and respect Brennan, the proverbial tough-but-fair cop who gets the job done ever if a few rules get chipped. Indeed, Brennan saved the life of one of his interrogators during a shootout when "he took a bullet in his hand and threw it back." So we have the theme of the fallen hero, and the question of how much pitch a raffish cop can touch before his moral nature darkens forever and rough tactics come to include murder. It also becomes clear that each man in the room (the group includes those of Irish, Puerto Rican, and African descent) harbors racist notions and resentments, though Riley is one who has struggled to overcome his. On the other hand, loyalty to their badges, plus the necessities of day-to-day law enforcement, can make these men put the lid on their bigotry; yet under that lid bigotry quietly boils, subtly and sometimes not so subtly influencing the course of the investigation. And always threatening to come into play is the unwritten code of silence that keeps cops from blowing the whistle on errant cops.

Excited by the potential richness of these matters and by Lumet's dependable skill with actors, I couldn't wait for Hutton, Nolte, and the other actors to go deeper into the investigation and really start locking horns.

But, after barely twenty-five minutes of fairly tense confrontations, the characters are out of the interrogation room and roaming all over the city, and after a while they're even out of the city and down in San Juan. Everybody—investigators, suspects, witnesses, informants—is chasing clues, beating up stool pigeons, snarling threats, cutting deals, offering protection, hiring assassins, outwitting assassins, assassinating assassins, calling in old debts, and generally being busy, busy, busy. We lose track of how close Riley is getting to the truth because Lumet constantly hops from the assistant D.A.'s investigation to Brennan's (the rogue cop is tracking down witnesses so he can snuff them) to that of a gangster played by Arman Assante, who is conducting his own to protect himself from Brennan. Each time the script shifts focus, we have to adjust to the fact that the pursuer we are now watching has picked up new evidence while he was offscreen and is therefore more enlightened or more confused (or both!) since we last saw him. But, since Lumet never bothers to reorient us to the character at hand, we come to regard everyone with the dazed wonder of a tourist observing tribesmen whose customs are totally strange and whose actions seem without sequence.

Toward the end of *Q&A*, we are suddenly given lumps of information about who did what to whom and for what reason, but these explanations don't really compensate for the alienating confusion of the bulk of the movie. Did Lumet discover in the cutting room how incoherent his storytelling was and then try to reshape the final scenes so as to include as much explanation as possible? Watching this film is like listening to an insanely inept raconteur constantly interrupting himself with remarks such as: "Oh, yeah, let me put off telling you about the blowout that killed five people in the car and deprived Cousin June of her right eye until I explain why tires made in Brazil only blow out in cold weather and not in...."

As *Q&A*'s action scatters, its themes get deflated. The good-cop-gone-wrong theme comes to nothing because no traces of Brennan's former virtues remain in the character we see on screen. We can't measure a fall unless we see the pedestal from which the figure toppled. Nick Nolte, slinging his currently huge gut

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forward and sometimes sideways, has an histrionic wallow playing Brennan as a sort of urban Long John Silver. But an enjoyable monster is not the same thing as a fallen hero, and it's the latter that I think Lumet had in mind.

In his dialogue, Lumet rings so many variations on the theme of bigotry that we come to perceive this problem as the central concern of the movie. But though the examples multiply, they remain isolated specimens instead of forming a pattern of evil that would help unify the movie. Compare *Q&A* to *Chinatown* where the motif of rape (of land and of women) is repeatedly sounded precisely because rape turns out to be at the heart of *Chinatown*'s mystery. When the motive for Brennan's crime is uncovered in *Q&A*, it turns out to have nothing to do with racism.

Lumet tries to fulfill the theme of police corruption by showing Riley and his assistants finally failing to go public with their evidence when the D.A.'s office tries to hush up the Brennan affair. But the reasons given for each investigator's silence are lame, and the weakest one of all is Riley's: his dead policeman father was involved with Brennan in some minor bribe taking and the revelation of this would lose Riley's mother her widow's pension. But it seems to me that since Riley is by now in possession of the facts concerning some noisome police scandals, all he has to do is collaborate with Pete Hamill or Joseph Wambaugh on a best-selling exposé and his mother would be on easy street for the rest of her life. Lumet tries hard to be the cynical tough guy in his work, but maybe he's not cynical enough.

His skill with actors remains. Along with Nolte's enjoyable hamming, we get a cleanly etched portrait from Hutton that indicates he's no longer vying with Anthony Perkins to be the Prince of Nervous Tics. Bullock-strong Charles Dutton and ferret-swift Luis Guzman entertain as Hutton's sidekicks. Lee Richardson, as a sly, compassionate cog in the legal machinery, can render thinking visible on screen. Best of all is elegant and menacing Armand Assante who plays his gangster as a self-styled Borgia of sleaze. When Assante gets dispatched quite a few minutes before its conclusion, *Q&A*, in effect, ended for me. It's an odd study of moral corruption that makes you regret only the death of a cocaine merchant.

RICHARD ALLEVA

STAGE

MAGGIE FOR THE FUN OF IT

'LETTICE & LOVAGE'

I cannot swear to it but I suspect I was the only person who found himself thinking about an obscure World War II melodrama while watching Maggie Smith go through her incredible antics in the first act of *Lettice & Lovage*. Most of the film, whose name escapes me as I write this, had to do with intrepid adventures at sea, but there were brief cuts back to England in which Charles Laughton, as the admiral in charge of operations, chewed scenery with such grandeur that I doubted that anything—even a battle at sea—could upstage him. Enter Cecil Parker. Parker, as a foreign office type, had one scene with Laughton and, knowing what he was up against, Parker exaggerated the official Englishmen he often played. He became so cold, so tight, so rigid that he commanded my eyes, my attention as Laughton oozed all around him.

As I watched and listened to Maggie Smith with wonder and joy as her body and her voice fluttered and soared and pirouetted around the stage, I kept waiting to see what Margaret Tyzack—an excellent actress as those who remember her Countess in *All's Well That Ends Well* know—would do in the face of so histrionic a storm. Enter Cecil Parker. When Tyzack finally appeared at the end of act 1, she quickly established that this was her stage too. She walked firmly where Smith floated; she held herself stiffly straight where Smith's equally upright figure could corkscrew if necessary; she spoke briskly, brusquely, direct and head-on while Smith's voice went high or low, scurried to wherever the laugh lay. The character whom Tyzack plays—a bureaucrat with the Preservation Trust—may have dictated her style, but I prefer to think of her performance as half a thespic contest. The flamboyance prize went to Maggie Smith clearly, but often, while she was doing intricate and amusing things, I found my eyes wandering to Tyzack to check her responses. This was not a top banana-second banana sketch; this was a real comic team at work.

The first act belongs to Maggie Smith. As Lettice, a guide at Fustian House, the most boring building administered by the Preservation Trust, she shares the stage with a group of actors who change costumes and characters to represent groups of tourists at different times. From her first, presumably historical account of what happened—or rather did not happen—at Fustian House, a presentation that invokes yawns and impatience, Lettice invents, decorates, emotes (her mother toured on an all-female Shakespeare company in France) until she has an enthusiastic audience at her feet. The variations she plays on the Fustian story are a small joke that looms large only because of Maggie Smith's comic talent. I once saw her vie with Joan Plowright for eccentricity honors in a production of *The Way of the World* in London. For me, Plowright won because she played Lady Wishfort and, however outrageous the actress became, she remained in character; Smith, as Millamant, could only chalk up points at the expense of her character, who became silly in a way Congreve never intended. In *Lettice & Lovage*, however, in a role created for her by Peter Shaffer, anything and everything goes and goes swimmingly. Although Lettice has moments of distress, the play is hardly a heartbreaking comedy like *Bed Among the Lentils*, in which Smith was so marvelous on PBS. Lettice is essentially a cartoon character, as is Lotte Schoen (Tyzack) in her different way. So too with the secondary characters played broadly and funnily by Bette Henritze and Paxton Whitehead, whose part consists largely of surprised reactions.

Having given us Lettice/Smith in full flower, Shaffer turns to a plot of sorts. Lotte, it turns out, is a bottled-up romantic under her sensible office clothes, and she has to be saved by Lettice and Lovage. Lovage is an ingredient of a medieval drink which Lettice gives Lotte and, in the great tradition of booze

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as a repression remover, the drink rescues Lotte from the role that a drab society has forced upon her; after all, stage drunks do not have delirium tremens, they see six-foot white rabbits named Harvey. After a labored twist or two in the plot, Lotte, in her turn, must save Lettice from giving up on a world that lacks the color to make life a joy. They end by planning to form a tour operation of their own to show people the ugliness and banality of contemporary architecture.

If we were to take the final project seriously, the play could be seen as an advocate of the Prince Charles school of architectural criticism. New is bad, tacky, shoddy. Anyone who, like me, enjoys the high-tech classiness of the new Lloyds of London building or likes to wander through the National Theatre complex is likely to distrust Prince Charles and to find the final joke of *Lettice & Lovage* not as funny as it seems to think it is. Shaffer appears, almost accidentally, to have built his ending on unprepared ground. If the play were really about the richness-of-then versus the thinness-of-now, Fustian House would not have been the historical bore it is. From the beginning, the play—through Lettice—has advocated imagination, emotion, incandescence over fact, control, shadow. What more could one expect from the author of *Equus*, which celebrated the healthiness of neurotic violence. This kind of reading asks too much of *Lettice & Lovage*. Shaffer seems to want to maneuver his play into making a statement of some kind, an attempt that makes the third act so much flatter than the first, but the comedy is not really a vehicle for ideas but for two fine comic performers. Go to *Lettice & Lovage* just for the fun of it.

GERALD WEALES

MEDIA

'REAL' CARTOON CHARACTERS

'THE SIMPSONS'

Not long ago, Homer Simpson got a little blitzed at a bachelor party for one of his co-workers at the Springfield nuclear power plant, and wound up dancing on the table with the inevitable bachelor-party belly dancer. His son Bart, who was having dinner with the rest of the family in the restaurant where—unbeknownst to them—the party was also taking place, and who had just gotten his mail-order spy camera, happened into the banquet room, saw Dad cavorting with the belly dancer, snapped a shot, and began selling it around school. Pretty soon the picture was all over Springfield.

Well, don't you know, one day ol' Homer is in the local Kwik-E-Mart getting some donuts, and the fellow behind the counter, who has the famous photo taped to the wall, looks at him and says, "Hey—don't I know you? You on TV or something?"

"Naah," smiles Homer, "you must be thinkin' about Fred Flintstone."

And *there* is the moment when, I hope, as you watch "The Simpsons" on the Fox Network, your hand pauses carrying the Cheet-O's to your mouth, and you blink and say to yourself, "My God—how brilliant!" I did.

How "The Simpsons" made it to the Tube—a prime-time *cartoon* sitcom for grownups, drawn and scripted, yet, by Matt Groening of the comic strip "Life in Hell," who is to cartooning approximately what Andy Kaufman was to standup comedy—is as wonderful a mystery to me as how the Manhattan Project ever worked. Nevertheless, there it is, every Sunday night, scrounging for ratings as desperately as its feckless hero, Homer, scrounges to keep the job for which he is eminently unqualified. It is already a campus-cult favorite, and *TV Guide* recently featured Homer, wife Marge, sibs Bart and Lisa and baby Maggie on the cover, with a very smart essay by Joanna Elm, "Are the Simpsons America's TV Family of the '90s?" *and* the April 23 *Newsweek* also featured all five on its cover, with a longer and less clever essay. So—as Homer might say—watcha thinka *that*, hey?

What I thinka *that* is that TV has finally gotten the famous first sentence of *Anna Karenina* right: all happy families are alike, but every unhappy family is unhappy in its own special way. But what Tolstoy doesn't tell you is that all happy families are alike because "happy family" is a null set; and what he couldn't have told you is that, today, all unhappy families watch the Tube together. And in "The Simpsons," the Tube watches them back. *Us* back.

Since that brilliant man, Desi Arnaz, decided in 1952 to shoot "I Love Lucy" with a three-camera setup before a live audience, the sitcom has been not only the staple cash crop of TV, but increasingly one of our crucial metaphors for the way we think we should live our lives. It's a complex interrelation of audience demand and audience supply. TV has become *the* family ritual, and—in the manner of all ritual behavior—has come to reflect its context in its content, becoming the ritual of and about the family. Everything's okay, it says: the most outrageous problems can all be resolved, with wit and mutual trust, within a half-hour of teleplay. And the ending clinch, double-take, or final one-liner, to audience laughter and applause, with the promise that the same crazy gang will be back next week, unscathed and ready for another bout with the terror of the quotidian, is as formal a blessing on the participants in the ritual—the viewers—as are the words, *Ite, Missa est.*

There's a difference, of course. The Mass asks you to bring something—yourself—so that you can take away something more—all of us in our mutual woundedness and hope. The sitcome asks you only to be there and watch (quite literally a "sit!" com), so that it can tell you that nothing is really wrong; can't be wrong; shouldn't be wrong, because, after all, isn't this a *family*?

I wonder how many wife- and child-beatings are traceable to—wonderful as it was—the old "Dick Van Dyke Show." I mean, if you were raised on this, and then you get married and then you have kids, and then you find out that the bad things—the bills, the 3:00 A.M. feedings, the one-too-many with the neighbors—*don't* go away so fast, if you find out that you're not Rob and Laura Petrie, don't you feel cheated? Don't you want to hit somebody? And who, after all, is closest?

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Nineteen hundred and fifty-two was the year of "I Love Lucy" as the canonization of the Ideal Happy American Family and it was also—give or take a few months—the year of the myth's literary demolition. J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* has to be one of the most important American novels of this century just because it subverted the myth of the blissful nuclear family at the very time that myth was being formulated. Holden Caulfield knew that the scenario of "Lucy" and "Father Knows Best" was a dangerous lie before there was a "Lucy" or a "Father Knows Best." So why didn't we?

Blame it on Eisenhower, IBM, or sunspots, but the fact is we didn't. Even today, the sanctity of the "happy" (read: TV) family is strong enough that *Life* and "Donahue" canonize kids who turn in their moms to the cops for smoking dope. Never mind that the moms are also usually getting the bad end of the stick in divorce settlements; and never mind that this version of the family should remind you of the Marine lieutenant's justification for torching the village of Bien Tre: "It became necessary to destroy the city in order to save it."

The genius of "The Simpsons," for me, is that it deconstructs the myth of the happy family wisely and miraculously leaves what is real and valuable about the myth unscathed. In this, it's unlike, say, "Roseanne" which reduces the myth to a caricature, or "Married...With Children," which reduces it to an especially stupid caricature.

Maybe "caricature" is the important word here. Homer, Marge, et. al. are *cartoon* characters, after all and Matt Groening, as a draftsman is—well, not Albrecht Dürer. So they are caricatures, not just of *us*, but of us in our national delusion that the life of the sitcom family is the way things are "supposed" to be. Every week, in the great main-title sequence, they all race home at the end of the day from job, school, grocery, to line up and plop down on the sofa in front of—what else?—the TV. And as, week after week, they try to live as if they *were* the Flintstones, or the Andersons, or the Petries, and discover—don't we all?—that they're *not*, they humanize themselves and us to a degree the Connors of "Roseanne" or the Bundys of "Married" don't.

"The Simpsons" is truly funny and, like all truly funny things, profoundly sane. And in the same season, "Twin Peaks" has appeared and Morton Downey, Jr. has been ignored off the airwaves. It's almost alarming: could we, as a nation of viewers, be smarter than we thought? Stay tuned. FRANK McCONNELL

BOOKS

In Ouagadougou, the road more traveled

LORDS OF POVERTY
The Power, Prestige, and Corruption of the International Aid Business
Graham Hancock
The Atlantic Monthly Press, $17.95, 234 pp.

John P. Hogan

Ten years ago I was working in Burkina Faso (then Upper Volta). One evening in Ouagadougou, I ran into a group of U.S. Agency for International Development staffers who had just returned from chaperoning a Washington biggie on a project visit. They had set out early that morning toward the Niger border to see a several-million-dollar stretch of highway just completed under an AID contract. The staffers, however, were furious and embarrassed: heavy rains had demolished the highway and the culvert walls had burst, causing the whole roadbed to wash away. The shiny jeeps got stuck in the mud.

The staffers were even more devastated when they were led to the only alternative route available, a small but sturdy secondary road still under construction by a group of high school boys and an Italian missionary priest. This road, built rock by rock by local people with local materials, had weathered the heavy rains. The image of the *petit père* and the young *Burkinabé* leading the AID convoy along *their* road came back to me many times as I read *Lords of Poverty*.

Hancock dedicates his book to senior staff members at the World Bank who, he says, "illegally acquired and read" an original synopsis of the work and attempted to block his research. "[T]hey convinced me," he writes, that "the aid business has much to hide."

His thesis is that development assistance is a sixty-billion-dollar-a-year sacred cow, which crushes local initiative and poisons the environment. He develops it through a two-pronged case-study approach. The first describes examples of self-serving bureaucrats at the World Bank, United Nations, U.S. AID, and Britain's Overseas Development Administration. He dwells on life-styles, salaries, consultant fees, housing, and cars, all of which serve to cut development workers off from the very people they are supposed to be serving. In a description of the "limo-lock" at a World Bank function, we are told, "Thus, like Siamese twins joined together at the hip, aid bureaucrats and their limousines are never far apart."

The second thrust paints vivid portraits of some costly development fiascos. This is the more helpful side of the analysis. The book provides grim examples for both development personnel and taxpayers: grain shipped to Somalia during the 1986 famine which had been rejected by San Francisco zookeepers; frostbite medicine and electric blankets sent to Africa; a large hydroelectric

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dam project in Ghana designed to send electric power hundreds of miles but which caused thousands of cases of river-blindness in the local population; the massive $434 million World Bank resettlement scheme, "Polonoreste," in Brazil, where $250 million was spent to build a highway that has become a quick corridor facilitating slash-and-burn farming techniques and a turnpike for "rapid commercial penetration of the region." As a result, the environment has been devastated and local Indian tribes "virtually wiped out."

While generally positive about private, nongovernmental organizations, Hancock hits hard at World Vision and The Hunger Project. The latter organization raises funds in the U.S. and Britain to fight malnutrition and starvation in third-world countries. Hancock claims that in 1985 The Hunger Project raised $6,981,005 of which only $210,775 went to relief in poor countries. The rest was spent in the U.S. on overhead!

But the real and costly culprits are the large multilateral and bilateral agencies. U.S. AID and UN agencies are severely criticized for their botched response to the Somalia drought of 1987, which Hancock reports was replete with delays and miscalculations and marked by failure to listen to local people. Examples of project failures from around the world fill page after page; they include graphic accounts of the killing effect of "structural adjustment" loans on the poor.

According to Hancock, the big development agencies believe they can't afford to "ask the poor"; local people's participation in project design, implementation, and management is too time-consuming and cumbersome. Small is not beautiful. The larger the better and "if a project is funded by foreigners it will typically also be designed by foreigners and implemented by foreigners...."

Hancock caps off his caustic critique with sections on the "drug of food aid" and accounts of how foreign assistance has lined the pockets of corrupt leaders: the Marcoses, the Duvaliers, Bokassa, and Mobutu. He agrees with the Mexican community activist he quotes: "If you live in Mexico City today you are either rich or numb if you fail to notice that development stinks."

The last chapter neatly sums up the view that the sacred cow is really a sacrilegious vulture. "Aid is not bad...because it is sometimes misused, corrupt, or crass; rather it is *inherently* bad, bad to the bone and utterly beyond reform." His conclusion is that the lords of poverty should exit. Aid should be stopped—immediately.

I have some problems with Hancock's factual assertions, but they are relatively minor. For example, I know agency officials who don't run around in limos, and I could list examples of successful projects. At this level, however, much of what Hancock says needs to be heard. My real problem concerns the conclusion he draws from his case-study approach. While the catalogue of failures offers grist for the auditor's mill, the text will not hold up as a handbook for the antiforeign assistance lobby. The author's problem is that he does exactly what he accuses the aid bureaucrats of doing. He views development from the outside. Like a peeping Tom, he catches some juicy glimpses but never sees the whole picture. A full response to such a negative tour de force is not possible here, but a few rejoinders are necessary.

> *This is not a book that campaigns for more aid; in my view, more of a bad thing can only be a worse thing. Neither is this a book that argues for a redirection of aid—for example, to better-designed projects or to more worthy countries. I do not accept that aid can be made to work if only method X is used in place of method Y, if only this is done instead of that, if only the political or commercial strings attached are forthwith removed, if only the poor are properly "targeted" rather than the better-off and so on. Such formulas, much loved by the aid industry, have about as much intellectual validity as the facile excuses of* tribal rainmakers *who deny the basic absurdity of dancing beneath the breathless sky and seek instead to explain the failure of their efforts in terms of obscure but correctable errors in their performance of the ritual.*
>
> —Graham Hancock
> *Lords of Poverty*

First. Hancock, for all his anger, is oblivious to third-world needs. The problems are colossal. Solutions should certainly be home-grown, but for some time to come outside help will be needed to be effective. Rashmi Mayur, an Indian development worker, faults Hancock because his admonition to stop aid offers no alternative "to alleviate the wretchedness of the earth" and he "makes no effort to distinguish between what works and what doesn't" (*Development Forum*, January-February 1990).

Second. Much like the large agencies he attacks, Hancock himself fails to distinguish between aid and development. Outside aid can help, hinder, or otherwise influence the development process, but cannot totally define it. Both development as process and development as project need to be understood. Hancock waxes eloquent and deadly on the latter but says nothing about the former. Discerning the direction of the process is the key to contributing to a country's development. Third-world people have evolved indigenous popular education and community development programs, usually with religious or ethnic roots. These approaches provide the basis for true liberation and development. However, it is usually this process that is truncated and compromised when a local group arrives at the project stage. When the big money arrives, community participation and self-determination get cut out. Thus the fiascos.

Third. It needs to be determined to what extent the failures that Hancock describes are the result of the bureaucratic culture of the aid institutions he criticizes, or the result of an imposed *modus operandi*. Until recently, large multilateral and bilateral agencies worked almost exclusively with national government institutions, which are often corrupt, incompetent, and entrenched colonial vestiges. The next few years should provide new insights as the World Bank, the UN, and U.S. AID look more to nongovernmental organizations to design and implement programs. Will the large donors have the sense to allow indigenous private voluntary and church groups the freedom to relate directly with and sup-

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port local community groups?

There are correctives available to balance Hancock's bitter message. Two come to mind. One is *Aid for Just Development* by Hellinger, Hellinger, and O'Regan (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1988), which calls for the large multilateral and bilateral agencies to support mediating structures for development activities—indigenous, local, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that can reach out to local communities. This would make possible local-level project planning and smaller project activities. Both first-world donor governments and third-world recipient governments could work through such structures. The authors also urge a network of collaboration between northern NGOs and southern NGOs.

A second corrective is the upcoming PBS series, "Local Heroes, Global Challenge," produced by the Harvard Institute for International Development. The series does not deny the failures in development efforts or the ongoing crisis in the third world but offers hope by showing examples of sustainable development activities in a number of countries including India, Ghana, Bolivia, and Indonesia.

Most important, if the affluent Western countries would depoliticize aid, untie it from a myriad of political, economic, social, and administrative prejudices, there would be fewer failed projects. Hancock is right, the big donor agencies do not listen to the poor. But that's where the problem lies—not in the very concept of development assistance. Drain the dirty bath water, but don't throw out the baby.

As for the road in Burkina Faso, the local committee decided what villages should be linked. A young engineer from the area drew up the plans. Mothers and daughters collected the rocks; fathers and sons laid the roadbed. But the *petit père* did play a crucial role. He trained a young man to facilitate the months of meetings and he got a small grant for the cement. The road took a long time to build but it is still there. □

A TRASHY WAR ON RUBBISH

TENURED RADICALS
How Politics Has Corrupted Our Higher Education
Roger Kimball
Harper & Row, $18.95, 204 pp.

Lee Siegel

By now the least informed member of the remotest tribe in New Guinea has heard that in the United States, as Roger Kimball reminds us, "the academic study of the humanities...is in a state of crisis." Kimball is at great pains to emphasize the point. He has tape-recorded academic symposia on the subject, examined the academy's official published reply to such critics as William Bennett and Allan Bloom, and scanned selected volumes of literary criticism and theory, as well as representative journals. In seven loosely connected chapters, with titles like "The Real Crisis in the Humanities" and "Speaking Against the Humanities," he presents his "report from the front."

We are in worse trouble than we thought. In the course of his investigation, Kimball uncovers "arrogance," "prattle," "trash," "rubbish," "slander," "fraud," and "perversion." He has witnessed the "metastasis" of dangerous intellectual developments into "a blueprint for a radical social transformation that would revolutionize every aspect of social and political life." He believes that "what is at stake is nothing less than the traditional liberal understanding of democratic society...."

Much of American higher education is indeed in a bewildering flux, and this truculent and distorting book will only make matters worse. For *Tenured Radicals*, notwithstanding the implied objectivity of its subtitle, is intensely partisan.

Kimball, managing editor of the *New Criterion* where most of this volume first appeared in less alarmist form, makes his case with what one might call invincible knowingness. People who have long been concerned about the educational effects of highly specialized avant-garde theories of language, literature, and society, but who believe that university professors cannot ignore the intellectual and cultural changes taking place around them, will marvel at his simplistic views, not to mention his intolerance. Take his charge that influential currents in the humanities—neo-Marxism, deconstruction, radical feminism, the writings of Michel Foucault, etc.—constitute a political "blueprint." Whatever you may think of the goings-on, the fact that so many fundamentally different theories have been concocted during the same period is more a sign of restless political naiveté than anything else. "Marxists" who adopt the deconstructionist belief in an infinite regression of meaning, followers of the essentially anti-Marxist Foucault who call themselves Marxists, radical feminists who borrow from everywhere and tangle with everyone—such a hodgepodge hardly amounts to a Communist-like conspiracy to undermine the humanities.

Kimball, however, writes as if these developments, evolving out of a century of ideas, were chance aberrations from a timeless norm. If you follow the implications of this premise, you may arrive at the conclusion that a strong hand, oft-bitten, could correct such deviations by, say, depriving academic malcontents of tenure's comfortable shelter.

Disturbing stuff. But, then, Kimball is a very stern and solemn fellow. He "portends," as he likes to say, business, and he is not afraid to point a finger or to name names. He does not shy, for instance, from accusing Richard Rorty, the liberal pragmatist philosopher, of being a "champion of many recent trends." Well, so what? Doesn't the concept of academic freedom allow a professor to champion whatever he or she wants? Not, apparently, if the fate of the nation hangs in the balance. To prove that it does, Kimball has documented many omens of large-scale catastrophe. My favorite is his agitated report that the *New Republic*, "a journal that under its current editorship has made such a show of cas-

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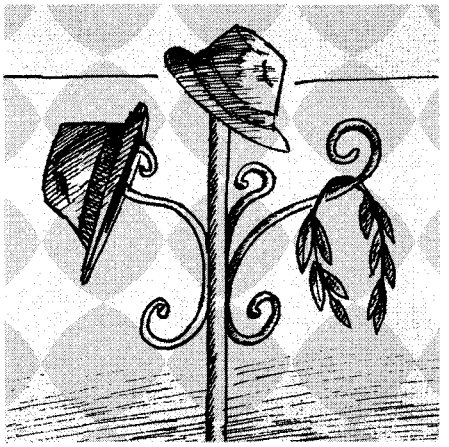

tigating anti-Semitism and supporting Jewish causes," actually *published* an article by literary theorist Professor Geoffrey Hartman defending Paul de Man, the discovery of whose wartime writings for a collaborationist newspaper in his native Belgium had ignited a heated controversy. Whatever got into those editors? Could it have been "the traditional liberal understanding of democratic society" the author says he wants to preserve?

On the central question of how, or how much, a university should respond to the world outside its walls, Kimball is equally austere. In the past, he tells us, higher education's "aim was [intellectually] truth; morally, its aim was virtue," and he advises us to go back to those days (readers who voted for Pericles will remember them). Beyond that, he doesn't say very much, except to recommend reading the Great Books, and lots of Matthew Arnold. Yet a great deal would have to be excluded from a curriculum meant, as Arnold proposed, to dispense moral instruction. You would have to start with the *Symposium*. *King Lear* would certainly have to go. And no more Lucretius *and* Milton—too confusing. As for Matthew Arnold, try to imagine the grave Victorian author of *Culture and Anarchy* spending a few months in contemporary New York City—he would have to rewrite that valuable but time- and culture-bound work and retitle it *Anarchy and More Anarchy*. But perhaps Kimball is too busy protecting the classics to find out what's really in them.

"Humanism," "virtue," and "truth" are the irreproachably best responses to "rubbish," "slander," and "fraud." The problem is finding new wine for those old bottles, particularly in a practical society like ours, where some people have developed a knack for simply picking them up and throwing them at other people. Or, as Kimball puts it in his discussion of "the gift to the cultural left the proposed Helms amendment has been": "...where else these days can one bask in the aura of outraged virtue by risking so little?" Unfortunately, the outraged Kimball has risked less than anyone. □

THE START OF SOMETHING BIG

THE INNOCENT
Ian McEwan
Doubleday, $18.95, 288 pp.

W.D. Keith

In his startling new novel, *The Innocent*, Ian McEwan teases his readers with the familiar landscape of the cold-war espionage thriller. Gray, frigid views of postwar Germany, plenty of cigarette smoke, and a parade of disillusioned faces are properly assembled. It is the winter of 1955 in Berlin, and the rubble of the last war has been largely cleared away. New buildings rise next to empty lots and new pavement is lined with young trees. Evidence of the next war is everywhere, however. Spies fill the city. One cafe is so densely filled with those buying and selling secrets that it resembles the Chicago futures market. The British and American allies are as mistrustful of each other as they are of the new Soviet enemy.

In these early days of the cold war new ground rules of secrecy, fear, and suspicion are being laid down and new players constantly recruited. The newest and certainly most "innocent" of these is Leonard Marnham, a near-sighted English post office technician with a university degree in electronics and little knowledge of the world beyond his parents' quiet home. Summoned to Berlin to participate in a British-American collaboration involving "telephones and communications devices," he is shunted by a peevish British lieutenant to an American contact, Bob Glass. Over the phone Glass raps out an address and a meeting time for the following morning and the line goes dead.

Feeling foolish and even more ignorant, Marnham wanders in the solitude of his new apartment, the first rooms he has ever had to himself:

"He caught sight of himself in a wall mirror and approached helplessly. His glasses, stained yellowish by evaporated body fat—this, at least, was his theory—perched absurdly above his nose. When he removed them his face appeared insufficient. Along the side of his nose were red pressure streaks, dents in the very bone structure. He should do without his glasses. The things he really wanted to see were up close. A circuit diagram, a valve filament, another face. A girl's face."

McEwan fashions his own landscape. This clinical examination of a solitary face fixes the reader's attention emphatically. We will be that close to all of Marnham's discoveries of flesh and spirit, and to the one act of unspeakable horror that he cannot avoid and from which we cannot wrench our attention. Matched with novelist McEwan's harrowing technical achievement is a carefully crafted vision of intimacy as a metaphor for politics.

Marnham's opinion of Americans comes only from the cinema and so his meeting with Glass produces his usual posture of defensive politeness and reflexive disapproval. Glass drives him to a warehouse on the outskirts of Berlin, just a hundred yards from the Russian sector. When finally admitted to the warehouse he is led underground to a secret tunnel—a tunnel that will ultimately end at the landline communications cable linking all the Eastern European capitals to Moscow.

Marnham's role in this effort is comically mundane: he is to open boxes of tape recorders, stack them on shelves, and then burn the cartons. Before this can begin,

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however, he shares a night on the town with Glass which ends in a crowded beer hall. There he meets of Maria Eckdorf, a thirty-year-old German office worker. From that night their affair unfolds blissfully in Maria's freezing cold-water flat, with piles of blankets, cheap wine, and sudden, wholly unexpected pleasures. With this woman Marnham forces his defenses down and wills a new life into existence. For Maria the affair represents a different kind of beginning. She has been persecuted by an ex-husband, a drunken lout named Otto who reappears unpredictably several times a year to extract money from her and smack her around. Maria's sexual initiation of Leonard reverses the customary structure of power.

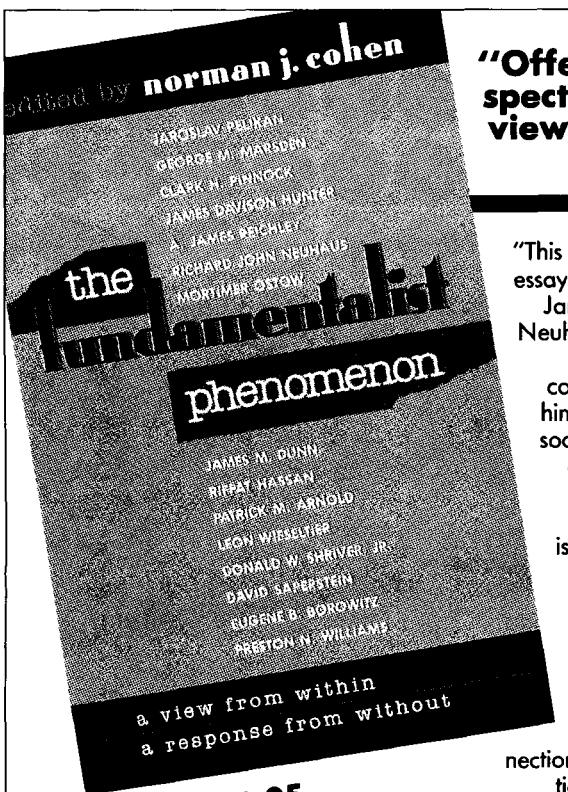
"Her fear of being physically abused had receded.... She was free, they were both free, to invent their own terms.... And she really had discovered for herself this shy Englishman with the steady gaze and the long lashes, she had him first, she would have him all to herself."

Marnham spends the rest of the winter commuting between his two secret lives. As the tunnel creeps toward its goal he finds a curious comfort in the damp maze of corridors filled with humming machinery and whispering men. He is entrusted with more essential tasks and is eventually enlisted by the British to spy against their American allies.

Maria is drawing him closer as well, but as his amatory confidence grows, so too do violent fantasies of domination. Though it survives his attempt to act these out, his relationship with Maria thereafter takes on a more settled, less ecstatic air. Having confronted each other's weaknesses, the couple soberly begins to think of marriage.

This interval of relative equality is shattered by the return of Otto. New realities of power, defense, and protection alter the bond between Leonard and Maria once again. Now they cling together, one admittedly stronger than the other, but both filled with fear. In this arrangement they decide to announce their engagement. At the engagement party Glass toasts "a newer and freer Europe" and commends a "marriage across borders."

Alone that night in bed, however, Maria confesses something that begins a sequence of sustained violence, nearly comic mishap, and horror, that is at once fantastic and utterly plausible. Every detail of this macabre nightmare is viewed with unblinking clarity, and when ultimately Marnham's two secret worlds collide, the damage is irreparable. A final postscript chapter places us in contemporary Berlin where walls are coming down and old enmities buried. With this backdrop McEwan's book attains a powerful elegaic force and resonance. He has at once confounded our expectations and created a wholly original rendering of a cold war not only between nations but at every level of human interaction, even the most intimate. □



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Holy folks & heavy tomes

Lawrence S. Cunningham

It has been unfashionable for some time to speak of the "Counter Reformation" because historians now believe that the events subsequent to the Protestant Reformation were not only a reaction to that great upheaval (although they were surely that in part) but an independent revival of religious life within Catholicism. There was, as the subtitle of Chatellier's interesting study indicates, a Catholic reformation that was not motivated solely by the events connected with Protestantism.

One factor of that religious revival was the custom, nurtured by the Jesuits, of forming religious sodalities of lay people who were expected to lead a certain form of life, engage in both private devotions and public manifestations of piety, and involve themselves in a range of charitable and educational works which covered everything from the care of prisoners to the redemption of prostitutes.

Chatellier studies the life and activities of these sodalities (of which there was a dense network by 1600) in different European cities. His work is an intensely interesting piece of social history which any educated history buff would enjoy. The theologian would find the work even more interesting because of Chatellier's conclusion, to wit, that a good deal of what became the spiritual style of modern Catholicism (daily prayers; Lenten observances; examination of conscience; regular confession and frequent Communion) was a result, not of the formal implementation of the teachings of the Council of Trent mediated through canons or preaching, but because of the example of these sodalities who vainly sought to re-Christianize Europe but ended up only (only!) in shaping the ways generations of Catholics practiced their faith.

The Europe of the Devout: The Catholic Reformation and the Formation of a New Society, *by Louis Chatellier, Cambridge University Press, $49.95, 270 pp.*

The Jesuit sodality was not a totally unique invention. It must be seen against the background of the confraternities which were so much a part of the late medieval and early modern spiritual landscape. In the post-Reformation period they made a mighty contribution to that *invasion mystique* of which the late Henri Bremond spoke. Readers interested in this lay piety may well wish to read, in tandem with Chatellier's work, two studies which discuss these confraternities in Italy and Spain respectively: Christopher Black's *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1989) and Maureen Flynn's *Sacred Charity* (Cornell, 1989).

Jodi Bilinkoff's study of the city of Avila (and its most famous citizen—Teresa of Avila) is so unremittingly focused on its topic that it manages to do the near impossible: write on this topic without ever once mentioning Teresa's friend and confidant, Saint John of the Cross. Never mind. What Bilinkoff does exceedingly well is to give us a genuine feel for the city both before and after Teresa's lifetime. There are very full chapters on the demographics of the town (it was quite small; it reached 12,000 inhabitants at the end of the sixteenth century); on its complex religious and social life; and finally, a good feel for the popular piety and theological influences of the age.

The Avila of Saint Teresa: Religious Reform in a Sixteenth Century City, *by Jodi Bilinkoff, Cornell University Press, $24.95, 218 pp.*

Bilinkoff is quite good on what was new in Saint Teresa's Carmelite reforms (e.g., her understanding of poverty; her shift from vocal to mental prayer) and what underpinned them: the poverty-centered theology of the Franciscans and the Erasmian-inspired (via the *devotio moderna*) shift to interiority. Saint Teresa is one of two women who have been named "Doctors of the Church" (the other is Saint Catherine of Siena whose spirit is not absent from this story) and a premier Christian mystic. Readers of this great saint's work will be enriched by this careful piece of social history which gives background and nuance to an encounter with those works.

Yves Congar, *by Aidan Nichols, O.P., Morehouse-Barlow, $19.95 (cloth), $12.95, 224pp.*

Yves Congar is one of the truly seminal figures of the contemporary Catholic theological world. His distinguished career as an ecumenist, ecclesiologist, and historian of theology largely shaped the ecclesial vision of the Second Vatican Council. He was a prophetic figure who, in his earlier career, had suffered from official suspicion and removal from teaching only to find, as was true of a number of his continental colleagues, that he was vindicated at the council. Congar's most attractive trait is his ability to combine an enormous erudition and a genuine sense of the church with an adventuresome openness to dialogue and reconciliation. He never lacked a sense of the Catholic church but he was open to the insights and gifts of other Christians in constructive ways.

Aidan Nichols's study of Congar is a reliable and well written guide through the major works of Congar. In chapters which discuss his theological, historical, and ecumenical interests, Nichols manages to do justice to Congar's thought and the abiding themes which recur in his work. Nichols is probably correct that Congar's theological style recaptures that kind of theology

LAWRENCE S. CUNNINGHAM *is a professor of theology at the University of Norte Dame. His most recent book, from Crossroad, is* Catholic Prayer.

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which was done, preeminently in the East, before the rise of the universities. His interest was in the richness of the ecclesial tradition and the great christological and pneumatological forces which it mediates. Although Congar was a Thomist to the depths, his Thomism was historically rooted and rarely speculative.

As chance would have it, I had just reread Congar's *Tradition and Traditions* (Macmillan, 1966) a few months before coming on this work. Nichols has helped me understand why it is profitable to go back to Congar and why we learn so much from him. I recommend his book but would suggest reading it in tandem with *Fifty Years of Catholic Theology: Conversations with Yves Congar* (Fortress, 1988) where the man rather than the doctrine shows forth a bit more vividly than is true of Nichols's study.

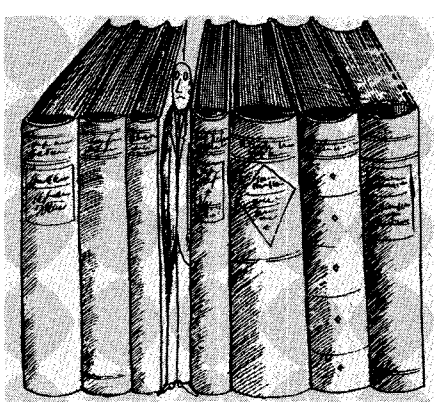
Faith in a Wintry Season: Conversations and Interviews with Karl Rahner, *edited by Paul Imhof and Hubert Biallowons, Crossroad, $22.95, 207 pp.*

The late Karl Rahner was one of the most fecund speculative theologians of this century. He combined, in a magisterial fashion, the insights of contemporary philosophy with a grasp of Christianity which was deeply mystical and fundamentally indebted to his lifelong encounter with *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola. Always an independent thinker, Rahner was able to balance a great love and respect for the church with a voice that could be critical and challenging. Done mostly at the end of his life, the interviews collected in this volume (the third of such collections) illustrate that delicate balance. Rahner could be critical of theologians like Hans Küng or amateurs like Ernesto Cardenal for their disrespect for ecclesial authority while, at the same time, feeling free to criticize Roman authority when authentic teaching was not the issue. When asked about the style of the current pontiff, for example, Rahner drily answered that one could obey but one need not applaud.

The "wintry season" of the book's title refers to a phrase that Rahner used as early as the 1970s (he died in 1984) to describe the climate of our culture. He saw a future when authentic believers might live in a totally rational technical culture which would call on great holiness for survival and witness. Yet, despite that bleak prospect, these pages demonstrate a hope-filled vision as the old theologian hammered at his most basic conviction: God's grace is fundamental and ubiquitous.

Rahner speaks, in these pages, of his intellectual development, his hopes for the future, and of his theology and its reception. There are interviews with Marxist philosophers and young students as well as scholarly probes into the maturation of his theology. Above all, there is the austere voice of Rahner himself: Catholic to his depths yet adventuresome of mind. It is an edifying book and one that I recommend with enthusiasm.

Leonardo Boff, like Rahner and Congar before him, has suffered at the hands of authority but in Boff's case it was not during the gelid days of Christian orthodoxy but in the more immediate past. Again, like Rahner and Congar, he is a prolific author with only a portion of his work translated from his native Portuguese. This work is a pastiche taken from works published in Brazil as early as 1977. Some pieces show their age. One wonders, for example, if, in the light of current events, Boff is still adamant in his conviction that socialism is the inevitable next step in human history with the demise of capitalism as part of the dynamic of "objective history." Recent world events make us think that such a sweeping (Marxist?) generalization is counterintuitive.



Despite such moments, there is much in this work to admire. I very much like Boff's reflections on the nature of theology, especially his telling question: To what cause is a particular theology committed, that is, what is its ideological underpinning?

Faith on the Edge: Religion and Marginalized Existence, *by Leonardo Boff, Harper and Row, $19.95, 212 pp.*

In the same vein, I would second his conviction (his detractors will be surprised by this!) that any theologian who claims the name must master the tradition, from the Bible to the statements of the magisterium before all else. This is part of that "toil" which Thomas Aquinas says daunts those who seek to do theology.

Boff, it is clear, has done this hard work and, as a result, his theology can bring forth "old things and new" as the Scripture says. Writing from the perspective of the Latin American scene, he can be as critical of progressive European theology as that of its conservative antagonists. Those who charge that the liberationist theologians practice politics with a theological patina should read a volume like this. Boff puts into practice a kind of theology that looks back to the past and toward a still unclear but hope-filled future. That not everyone shares his vision does not gainsay the creative insights that he provides. *Faith on the Edge* is a mixed bag, but, on balance, I would give it high marks for the creativity and passion of its theological vision. Those interested in liberation theology should have it on their shelves.

My firm conviction is that one cannot possess too many reference books. They are not only useful for checking facts but they make a wonderful browse for those who revel in the idle turning of pages with the expectation of coming on an odd fact or two. Hence, my desire to note two reference books within reach of many pocketbooks.

The Perennial Dictionary of World Religions is a reprint of a dictionary published in 1981 under the title *The Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions*. It is a useful

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volume with entries written by some very fine scholars (the one on Christianity, for instance, was done by Martin Marty) and its range of topics is wide indeed. It also has some very useful maps and some adequate illustrations. Since the current publisher did not update the work, a few entries are out of date (for example, the entry on "canon law" does not take into account the new code), but not many. Like all dictionaries, this one includes eccentricities. There is an entry on marriage in Islam but none on the other major religions; there is an entry on Christian missions but none on Islamic missions; there is no extended entry on religious education. One could multiply such instances but only to carp. Given the bulk one does get and the modest price demanded, this is a buy not to be missed.

The Perennial Dictionary of World Religions, *edited by Keith Krim, Harper and Row, $22.95, 830 pp.*

The Dictionary of Christianity in America is a wonderfully useful volume. Conceived by Evangelical scholars, it is a comprehensive resource on the religious life of this country. All of the intricacies of American religious history are covered, from movements and persons to doctrines and manifestations of popular religion. The editors assembled an ecumenical group of contributors (truth in advertising compels me to admit to writing some short entries) so the Evangelical slant of the sponsors is not obtrusive. More than adequate attention is paid both to Roman Catholic and Orthodox topics, but the real strength of this work rests in its capacious treatment of Protestantism.

The Dictionary of Christianity in America, *edited by Daniel Reid, Intervarsity Press, $39.95, 1305 pp.*

There are some wonderful long articles (I especially liked Mark Noll's contribution on the Bible and American culture), but the real value of the volume is in its coverage of the eddies and byways of the whole panoply of the Christian presence in this country. Every student of religion in America will wish to own this carefully edited and unfailingly well-written volume. □

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 370)

society—not just in the field of health but universally, in the home and in other occupations. The dilemma this has created for nurses was pointed out by Susan Reverby, professor of women's studies at Wellesley, in a book-length study; in trying to fulfill their duty to care, she wrote, nurses "have confronted a series of limitations, of imagination, of cultural ideology, of economics, ultimately of political power."

Care has two aspects, as the social policy analyst Hilary Graham has pointed out; identity and work. It is essential for all health workers to identify themselves as caring persons; both physicians and nurses, when asked, will exclaim that they care. And they do. But, as Daniel Callahan wrote, the *work* of giving care must be valued. Mr. Callahan sees medicine as failing to educate students for caring. The reason, I suggest, is that physicians and surgeons

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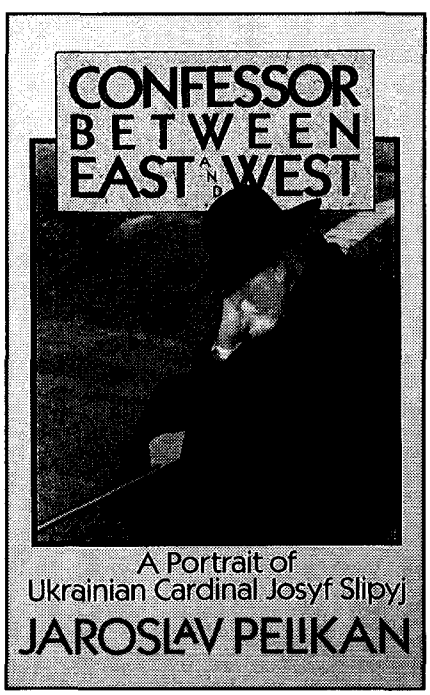

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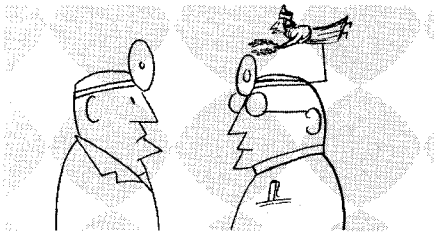

pursuing cure do not "dwell with" the individuals and families in need of care, not, at least, to the extent and in the depth that nurses do.

Nurses spend shifts, work-weeks, months, even years in significant and intensely personal interaction with those in need. They provide safe passage to the dying, often through long, torturous vigils with the dying and their families. They provide comfort at 3 A.M. to the cancer patient in pain. They clean blood, feces, and urine off the laboring woman about to give birth. They celebrate the AIDS patient's birthday as a substitute for the family who will not. They take the time to befriend the elderly husband of the confused Alzheimer patient. They persist in efforts to develop a relationship with the pregnant thirteen-year-old in order to break the cycle of abuse and neglect.

I believe this immersion in the life experience of others facilitates the development of an ethic of care. Nurses have always been called on to respond to the vulnerability of others; for them, caring has never been a consolation prize. It is a deeply embedded imperative that represents the essence of nursing.

It is not improper that physicians, obeying a complementary but different imperative, put caring in second place, below the work of cure. As the health system is now structured, however, power and authority are disproportionately given to curative practitioners. If Callahan's vision is to be realized, if we are to institute a compassionate health *care* system, an essential step will be to empower the nursing profession. Most physicians will not jump ship, abandoning the $120,000 median salary they earn by providing curative services in exchange for the salaries of nurse care-givers. Caring simply does not have a high dollar value in our society. Those of us who make our livelihood from the work of care know that lucrative financial awards are not to be had. Our reward is profound insight into the human condition. We gain these insights because we are able to "be with" individuals and families during long periods of intense need.

All this has a bearing on Callahan's description of the costs of medicine. Models that integrate care-providing services and cure-oriented medical services are more cost-effective than the prevailing system. The most cost-effective models have nurses as the keystone providers. An example is the nurse practitioner in primary care who can take forty-five minutes to discuss sexuality and responsibility with a young woman because she is simply not required to generate the revenue expected of physicians. Another is the geriatric nurse practitioner who can spend significant time assessing and planning for the care needs of long-term nursing home residents because this is her long-term work and not just part of a larger medical practice. Time and again, national and international studies have demonstrated the cost effectiveness of using nurses to provide most primary care services. Yet medicine continues to place roadblocks in the way.

Obviously, not all nurses perfectly fulfill the ideals of their profession; equally, not all physicians undervalue the work of care and the contribution of nurses. Institutionally, however, society and the health system do not recognize the "primacy of caring," and will not until through legislation and policy changes we empower nursing to realize its potential.

GENE ELIZABETH HARKLESS, R.N.

The writer is assistant professor in the department of nursing, University of New Hampshire.

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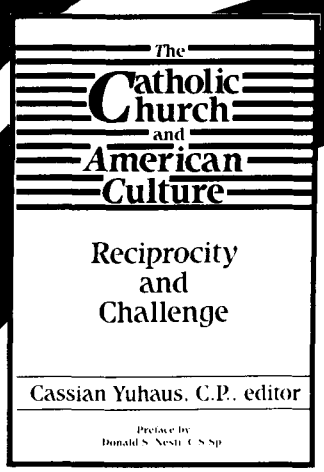

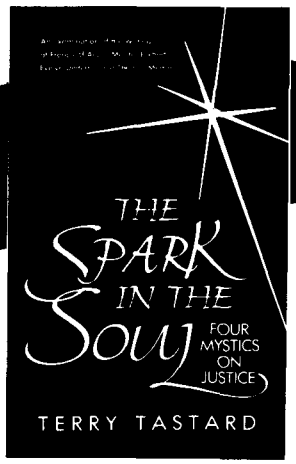

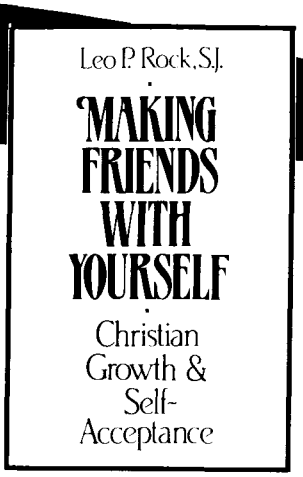

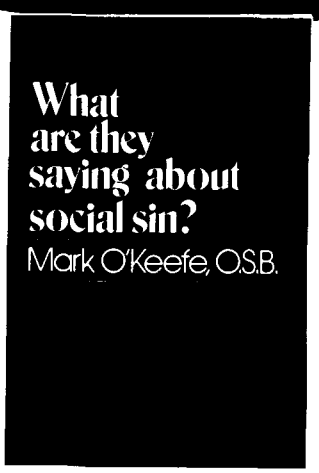

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- a threatened environment;
- growing poverty in a world of affluence;
- a plague of drug abuse reflecting deep despair;
- scientific advancements confronting us with life decisions without ethical principles to guide us;
- the need to resolve conflicts among nations, and groups within nations, when the temptation to use violence has the potential of destroying our planet.

The church should be providing wisdom and encouragement to believers to enter the dialogue on these issues. Unfortunately, today's church is crippled by its failure to address fundamental justice issues within its own institutional structures. It thus becomes a stumbling block both to its own members and to society.

We therefore appeal to the institutional church to reform and renew its structures. We also appeal to all the people of God to witness to the Spirit who lives within us, and to seek ways to serve the vision of God in human society.

Our call for reform covers many areas of church life.

We see women experiencing oppression, violence and inequality. Yet Vatican II's "Church in the Modern World" expresses respect for the fundamental rights of every person, and asserts that "every type of discrimination is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent."

We call upon church officials to incorporate women at all levels of ministry and decision-making.

We see many Catholics deprived of the church's sacramental life because of the declining number of priests. In particular, we see Catholics denied regular access to the Eucharist, the center of our worship and spiritual life.

We call upon the Church to discard the medieval discipline of mandatory priestly celibacy, and to open the priesthood to women and married men, including resigned priests, so that the Eucharist may continue to be the center of the spiritual life of all Catholics.

We see very few instances where the people of God are allowed by Church authorities to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Yet in 1970 Karol Wojtyla, now Pope John Paul II, wrote in his book, *The Acting Person:*

"Any authentic community is founded on participation...(Its structure) is correct only if it admits that practical effectiveness of opposition required by the common good and the right of participation."

We call for extensive consultation with the Catholic people in developing church teaching on human sexuality, just as the U.S. bishops invited participation in developing their teaching on social justice for the pastoral letters on peace and economic justice.

We see the pope and the Roman Curia selecting bishops throughout the world without input from local churches. Yet, as stated in the Cologne Declaration of 1989 supported by hundreds of theologians from many nations, "The procedure of nomination is not some private choice of the pope's."

We claim our responsibility, as committed laity, religious and clergy, to participate in the selection of our local bishops, a time-honored tradition in the church.

We see groups marginalized in our church because of race and ethnic identity.

We call for church leadership to speed up the enculturation of diverse peoples through new forms of liturgy, language and leadership drawn from the native culture of the people.

We see theologians silenced, constructive opposition condemned, loyalty oaths imposed and blind obedience demanded.

We call for open dialogue, academic freedom, and due process.

We see church officials conducting financial dealings in secret without accountability to the people.

We call upon the church to become a model of financial openness on all levels, including the Vatican.

We see stalled progress by our church officials toward the reunification of Christian churches, even though countless believers of all denominations have already shared the experience of an ecumenically open church at the local level.

We call upon our church officials to abandon their resistance on the remaining differences that separate the churches, and to translate the many results of their ecumenical dialogue commissions into serious concrete plans for reunion.

We see the Vatican downgrading the importance of national bishops' conferences.

We affirm in the U.S. the collegial and collaborative leadership style of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and call upon the universal church to affirm this traditional and effective exercise of church leadership.

We see the pain of countless people at the closing of their parishes and schools throughout the United States.

We call for a process that allows all those affected to be heard from, and to take part in these decisions.

We see many young adults and children of Catholic families who are reluctant to affiliate with a Church they view as authoritarian and hypocritical.

We call for a fundamental change so that young people will see and hear God living in and through the church as a participatory community of believers who practice what they preach.

Twenty-five years ago Vatican II clarified the mission of "The Church in the Modern World": to be a sign of God's saving work and a servant to the entire human community. The world is wracked by terrible problems—ecological perils, poverty and injustice, conflict and violence. To be a clearer sign and a better servant to God's global family, our church must reform its own structures. We call on all people within our church, in the spirit of co-discipleship and co-responsibility, to use their imagination and creativity. For the world's sake, let us make the church more faithful to its mission.

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